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STRAUSS AND RENAN.

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An Essay.

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An Essay,

BY E. ZELLER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

WITH INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE TRANSLATOR.



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STRAUSS AND RENAN.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

OF the two writers whose works are compared and discussed in the following Essay, those of one, Ernest Renan, are too well known to require much further notice here. Almost immediately on its first appearance it was translated into English, and from particular and especial causes obtained great popularity, or at least notoriety, in this country, as it had already done in that of the Author himself. It was read by, and became known to, many persons who were far from being professed theologians, or indeed theologians at all. Condemned as it had been in France by "Bishops innumerable and the Romish consistory itself," so also in England it was, if read, condemned, if not officially "by Bishops" who happily have no such power among us, at all events unofficially, and by those who take their standard of belief from that which Bishops are supposed to believe. On the other hand, it was read by great numbers who could not be insensible to its attractions. Those attractions were, the novel grace with which it invested a subject hitherto considered too profound, when critically handled, to be fathomed by the unlearned, the unparalleled beauty of its style, the idyllic or pastoral air which it threw around the principal personage, whom it also clothed with a reality unknown before, and whom it placed in the midst of scenery, which the author had

seen, and which he now described with a master-hand. Nor was there wanting an appearance of critical investigation, which, while it flattered the readers of the book that they, too, were becoming critical investigators, might readily be followed without any very great stretch of attention, and its results accepted without shocking any tenets but those of the very strictest orthodoxy. Nay, the writer of these lines once heard it observed by a reader of Renan's book, that had he not been a Christian already, that book would have made him one. Such an effect might, no doubt, have been produced, in one sense, by the spirit of tenderness and love which penetrates the work; but it must also have been a different sort of Christianity from that of those, the main-stay of which is an implicit belief in miracles as recorded in the New Testament, an unhesitating acceptance of the theory of inspiration, and, above all, of the doctrine, in its dogmatic form, of the Incarnation.

Such, then, in its main features thus briefly described, was the book of Renan. Very different is the case with that of Strauss. Of him and of his works but little, comparatively speaking, is known in England. It remains to be seen whether the English translation of his latest work will procure for him greater fame or notoriety. With regard to the writer it is probably known only to a very small minority that he published in Germany, in the year 1831, a work in two thick volumes (about 600 pages each) on the same subject and on the same fundamental principle as his latest one, which though it occupies in the translation two octavo volumes, is, nevertheless, in the original comprised in one, itself counting only 600 pages. The larger work was also soon after its appearance, translated into English by a lady who has since taken rank among the foremost writers of fiction of the time. It is understood

that the whole, or nearly the whole, of the edition has been sold. So that the book, though little heard of at the time of publication* or since, must have gained a footing somewhere, though without those main supports and grand advertising powers for so-called heterodox publications, the calm and dignified condemnation of Bishops on the one hand, and the noisy and clamorous assaults of Convocation on the other. With regard to the general reader, there can be no doubt that, as in Renan's book there was much to allure and attract, so in this, the first work of Strauss, there was much to repel. The style, no doubt, was singularly clear and transparent, the meaning never obscure, and the matter free from all mysticism, or what is sometimes designated in England, transcendentalism. This, especially in a German work, was certainly no slight merit. But, on the other hand, the fundamental principle, that of the "myth," as applied to the details of the New Testament, though adopted by Baur in the beginning of the nineteenth century as to the miraculous narratives of the Old, was new to the great majority of readers. In Germany, the volumes were welcomed by one party as containing the great theological discovery of the age; by another the work was attacked as striking at the root of all religion and religious belief. A whole body of theological literature was produced, which might have been placed in a category entitled "the Straussian Controversy," carried on as it was by the assailants of Strauss on the one hand, and Strauss himself on the other. Of these, some, as Schleiermacher, argued in a spirit which showed that they could appreciate the efforts of a powerful genius even when

* Answers, however, were attempted by C. J. Hare, late Arch-deacon of Lewes, &c., and others.

exerted on behalf of that which was unacceptable to themselves ; others as Tholuck and Olshausen would not have brought discredit upon an English Convocation. After a succession, however, of pamphlets and brochures, which were met by Strauss in part by independent pamphlets and brochures of about equal extent, in part in the prefaces to the successive editions of his great work, amounting in a few years to no less than four, the controversy came to an end. It left, as is generally the case, both parties unconvinced. In the meantime, the assailants had had the satisfaction of seeing their great opponent degraded by the high hand of authority from the appointment which he held as Professor of Theology at Stuttgart—a degradation, if so it is to be called, which he accepted in a spirit of uncomplaining acquiescence, which showed that however he might disregard or reject the external accessories of Christianity, he understood and acted up to the character of its internal essence far more than some of those who, in the interests of what they called Christianity, had controversially opposed or academically deprived him of his office.*

The general characteristic of this first work of Strauss was strict and severe logic, combined occasionally with bursts of eloquence, which showed that if the author wrote in a style which a critic might have called dry, he did so of choice and not of necessity. This characteristic, as has been before observed, was certainly one to repel rather than attract. It was this, however, which in the eyes of thinking and educated men gave the book its pre-eminent value, and placed it high above the theological treatises of the age. Nor did it fail to secure for it a

* See a small pamphlet entitled "The Opinions of Dr. Strauss" (Williams and Norgate, 1865.)

hearing in the English translation from "fit audience though few."

With regard to the "New Life of Jesus," to the discussion of which, as compared with that of Renan, the following treatise is more especially devoted, it has been supposed and not unnaturally, that it was composed and published as a sort of rival to the French work. This, however, was not the case. Strauss, in his preface, says that his own work was close upon completion when that of Renan appeared. The expressions which he uses in speaking of Renan are rather those of one who welcomes a coadjutor than opposes a rival. There can, however, be little doubt that the causes which led to the production of both works were the same. During the last thirty years, and even longer, there can be no question that not only in Germany and France, but even in England, to which may now, in some sense, be added Scotland, a great change has taken place in the minds of men as to the mode in which these subjects may be viewed. With the exception, professedly at least, of the Bishops, and some of the most bigoted and intolerant of men, to say nothing of women both young and old, a feeling has arisen that these subjects may be discussed in the interests of true religion and piety—that not all who side against superstition and dogmatic belief, are reprobate and abandoned men, who simply desire to get rid of certain trammels in order that they may give free indulgence to the impulses of a vicious nature. In this respect even the famous "Essays and Reviews," to say nothing of various other publications by men of unimpeachable character, must have done much towards enlightening and undeceiving the minds of men, possibly even those of women. Many have become aware that it is not an indispensable condition towards becoming in

heart and mind a Christian, to believe in proved contradictions of the most glaring kind, and have realised the fact that however "jealous" the God of the theocratic and hierarchical system of the Jews may be, "jealousy" cannot be an attribute of a Being who, by his very nature, must be full of gentleness, justice, righteousness, indulgence, and love—that such a Being cannot, as He is described in the Old Testament to have done, have committed or permitted acts which in capriciousness, cruelty, and even lust, exceed what an oriental despot could have conceived. A large number have become aware of the folly and contradiction involved in connecting, as with its basis and necessary support, by way of forced interpretation of many expressions called "prophecies" (now acknowledged to be nothing of the kind),* a world-wide religion with the fragmentary traditions of one of the most ignorant, exclusive, narrow-minded and superstitious nations that the world has ever seen, and have been compelled to admit that every attempt to reconcile the discoveries of progressive science with a cosmogony, even more puerile than that of Hindoos or Greeks, does but add one more failure to the many signal ones that have gone before.

So also with regard to the much-vexed question of inspiration. Preachers may, no doubt, be found at the present day who maintain what may be called "thorough" even upon this point, and who in the face of the mental, if not physical smiles of many, if not the majority among their audiences, will still insist on the plenary inspiration of every chapter, every verse, every

* See Dean Stanley's "Three Sermons" and Lectures xix., xx. "On the Jewish Church," to the effect that "Prophecy" does *not* mean "Prediction."

word, and every letter of "the Bible." But it may be doubted whether, if challenged, they could explain what they mean in a manner satisfactorily even to themselves. But whether or not, there can be *no* doubt that even on this subject, men's minds have undergone, and are undergoing, a very great change. Those who have taken note of the progress of this controversy can hardly have failed to observe, that the more the question is discussed the less intelligible becomes the principal term on which it turns; and that any attempt at *proof* must *assume*, without proof, the premiss from which the conclusion is to be drawn.* For, as we take occasion to observe in the note,

* It may, or may not, be worth while to notice the well-known passage so often appealed to, and which, in the English translation, stands as follows:—"All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction," etc. (2 Tim. iii., 16). In the original it is Πᾶσα γραφή, θεόπνευστος, καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἔλεγχον, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, κ. τ. λ. And first with regard to the translation. It is, we believe, admitted that this is doubtful, and that, in the absence in the original of the substantive verb, θεόπνευστος is by no means necessarily the predicate, but that ὠφέλιμος has an equal claim, καὶ being rendered *also*. So that understanding with θεόπνευστος not ἐστὶ, but what we have at least an equal right to understand, οὖσα, the meaning would be, not "all Scripture *is*, etc."; but "All Scripture (*every writing* would be the more correct translation, for, if an acknowledged and accepted body of writing was meant it should be πᾶσα ἡ γραφή) being, *i.e.*, if inspired by God, is *also* useful," etc., a proposition which no one would dispute. But, independent of this, what validity of proof is there in a man's own assertion that not only what he was then writing was "inspired," but a floating and then unsettled number of *other* writings, some of which were not even written, *e.g.*, the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, no unimportant part of "Scripture," surely, at the time he wrote. If it is argued, as no doubt it might be, that Paul foresaw "by inspiration" that these *would* be written, will it also be maintained that he foresaw that just these and no others relating to the Life of

even if we allow the common translation of the passage there discussed, it is impossible to allow a man's asser-

Jesus, of which, as we learn from Luke's preface, there were great numbers and many apocryphal accounts besides now extant, would be adopted into our "Canonical Scriptures?" But, then it must be also remembered that this adoption does not even pretend to have been made by "inspired" collectors, but by fallible men—namely, those assembled at the Council of Laodicea, about the year 360, "at which," as Gibbon says, "the Apocalypse was tacitly excluded from the Sacred Canon by the same churches of Asia to which it is addressed; and we may learn from the complaint of Sulpitius Severus that their sentence had been ratified by the greater number of Christians of his time." Gibbon then gives the reasons which influenced the Greek, Roman, and Protestant churches respectively to accept this strange tissue of wrathful and un-Christian denunciations into their respective Canons. The Greeks did so on the authority of an impostor, who in the sixth century assumed the character of Dionysius the Areopagite. As to the Romish Church, it was not until the year 1545, that the Council of Trent fixed the Seal of its infallibility on all the books of Scripture contained in the Latin Vulgate in the number of which the Apocalypse was fortunately included. "The advantage," Gibbon adds, "of turning those mysterious prophecies"—he might have added, "and ferocious denunciations"—"against the See of Rome, inspired the Protestants with uncommon veneration for so useful an ally." So that we see that this "inspired" book, which was thus, accidentally as it were, admitted into the Sacred Canon, not on Christian principles, but because its thunderous threats could be used against adversaries, and some of the terms of which, *e.g.* "Scarlet woman," even modern Protestant controversialists are not ashamed to employ against their fellow Christians—which more than any other feeds and fosters the wild and fanatical delusions of the most vain and foolish of our modern divines—very narrowly escaped the proscription of the Church, and was all but excluded from that "Scripture" which Paul is supposed, and in our version made, to assert "was given by inspiration of God." Would Paul himself, the Catholic-minded universalist Apostle, have admitted a book, whose every sentence glows with a fiery spirit of Judaistic vengeance into the same category with his own writings, the keynote of which is universal charity and world-embracing love?

tion of his own, or others' inspiration to carry any weight. Others have made such assertions, and we only reject them with ridicule and contempt. Mahomet laid claim to inspiration; so did Brigham Young, the founder of the Mormon sect. Plato asserts that all poets are inspired; and indeed, propounds a theory of plenary inspiration which would probably satisfy the most extreme demands of our modern believers in the inspiration of the "Scripture." He says, that "the Divinity takes their own mind out of them and uses them as ministers (*i.e.*, mouth-pieces), that we who hear may know that it is not they, the poets, who say these precious things, but that the Divinity himself is the speaker, and through them speaks to us." He also says that it is "through the worthless poet (substitute, in the case under consideration, the untaught fishermen of Galilee, or publican) that the god has sung the most sublime hymn, for the express purpose of showing us that these fine compositions are not human performances at all, but Divine; and that the poet is only an interpreter of the gods, possessed by one or other of them as the case may be." (Plato, *Ion*, p. 534, C. E., the latter English quotation being taken from Grote's *Paraphrase*, vol. i, p. 458 of *Companions of Socrates*.)

Here we see that neither the doctrine of inspiration nor the term was unknown to those who, in orthodox language, are called the "Heathen," nor are the exclusive property of Christians, or of Christian terminology. Not, of course, that this fact is any argument against the possibility of the thing itself, any more than the Hindoo belief in the Incarnations of Vishnu would be an argument against the Gospel doctrine of the Incarnation; or the supposed possibility of eliciting the doctrine of the Trinity from the

Timæus of Plato against the truth of that doctrine in itself. On the contrary it might be urged to show that the notion was not naturally strange or repulsive to the minds of men in what, as contrasted with a religious state, might be called a natural one. But it is, *valeat quantum*, good as against those—of whom, no doubt, there are many—who would maintain that *their* doctrine of Scriptural Inspiration is one of a peculiar kind, “unheard before, by gods or wondering men.” For they would at least have to show what are the specific characteristics of that doctrine as contrasted with the theory just described in Plato’s words. There is no question that they would sooner or later fall back upon the argument that the inspiration of the Bible is proved by the superior morality, the refined spirituality, the devotional spirit, the supersensual aspirations and innumerable other qualities which characterise the Bible, but which no other writings possess in the same or even in an approximate degree. Now, not to insist upon the fact that the morality, etc., of many of the lessons inculcated in the Old Testament are more than questionable, and that the contradictions, both in that and in the New more especially, are numerous and palpable to such an extent that no one not wilfully blind can by any possibility shut his eyes to them, is it not clear that he who attempts to prove inspiration by such an argument as this, is, in fact, appealing in the last resort to human reason and human conscience, and making *them* the supreme judges of what is good and what is bad. Is not the argument as completely circular as it can be? Would he reject, in so many words, *any* rule, or doctrine, or *fact* recorded in the Bible? No. Why not? because the Bible is God’s Word—because it is inspired. Once more—how does he *know* that it is inspired? Be-

cause all that is contained in it is moral, good, and true, and corresponds with the dictates of the (natural) conscience, reason, and enlightenment of mankind. If this is not an argument in a circle it would be well to know what is. It is good, because it is inspired ; it is inspired, because it is good. Not, indeed, that there is not a sense in which Isaiah and his school of preachers* in the Old Testament, and Paul and his school of writers in the New, may be said to be inspired, but it is not the sense in which the doctrine is maintained by the Pharisaic schools of Christians. It is that large sense in which all great teachers, whether in the Heathen or the Christian world, may be said to be, or to have been, inspired. Denunciation of God's wrath against sin, foresight of the fact that such sin and wickedness as Isaiah and Ezekiel saw around them must bring destruction upon the nation that practised it —no inspiration of a non-natural order was requisite in *these* matters for men as superior to *their* generation as Socrates was to his. Neither, surely, was any special inspiration necessary to enable Paul to denounce the indescribable abominations of the Heathen world, or to see that acrimonious disputes between rival sects and rival churches were then, as now, totally at variance with the spirit of charity and love inculcated by the Christ whom he bore, now spiritualised, in his heart of hearts, and whom he believed he had beheld with the eye of flesh. That the Master's teaching had in Paul's time made a deep impression on his mind and the minds of others is unquestionable; equally so that it had, as might naturally be expected, become developed and etherealised to an extent which even he himself, probably, did not either foresee or

* See Stanley, as quoted above.

expect. But that in this there is nothing more wonderful, nothing more requiring special intervention by inspiration, or otherwise, than in the case of Plato as compared with that of Socrates, is, we think, so clear to any one who meditates on the subject with an unprejudiced mind, and who knows how the torch of science and morality, when once lit, is passed on with ever-increasing brightness from generation to generation, that the point need not be further argued here.

It was, then, in view of the discussion of these questions, carried on with more or less success in his own country, since the publication of his first great work in the year 1831, and the interest awakened in the investigation of them, not only in the minds of professed theologians, but also of educated and enlightened laymen, that Strauss was induced to write the work of which Zeller's Essay gives a masterly sketch. The interest of which we speak has been evidenced not only in Catholic France and priest-ridden Italy, but also in orthodox England, by the appearance, in the first, of Renan's book; and in the last, of various works of more or less importance in point of extent, but all by men not only of calm judgment and considerable powers of thought, and deeply impressed with the importance, nay, the solemnity of the subjects on which they were engaged. Foremost among them stands Colenso, with his profound and elaborate volumes on the Pentateuch, each succeeding volume more profound and more elaborate than the last. Many other contributors also there have been towards the enlightenment of their generation, some of whom have risked reputation, social position, nay, even maintenance itself, as, indeed, was Colenso's case, in the cause of truth and the abolition of non-essential superstitious beliefs.

Under this category may be placed the well-known writers of the "Essays and Reviews;" R. W. Mackay, author of the "Progress of the Intellect;" W. R. Greg, whose work on the "Creed of Christendom" is hardly so well known as, from its clear and powerful writing, it deserves to be; Miss H. Martineau and others, some of whom—as Mr. Voysey, of Healaugh, have had the courage to utter, even from their pulpits, truths which it is, perhaps, safe to say, have never been propounded from pulpits before. But especially is it worth while to observe that, on what may be called the aggressive side, these questions are discussed in a very different tone from that in which they were discussed a century ago. Of the temper in which the action of this side is met by the defence, Bishops and Convocation, and so forth, the less for *their* sakes that is said the better; but no one, even of them, has ever dared to say that any one of their opponents is a scoffer, or not duly impressed with the seriousness of the matter in hand. Still less, as might perhaps have been said formerly, can any one of them be taunted with leading a life other, so far as appears, than one of the strictest morality, nay even, in some cases, of true piety and holiness, or as showing a temper (would that this were true of the champions of orthodoxy) incompatible with the Christian gifts of charity and love. Nor are there any, or but very few, who have not made some sacrifice, as was said before, on behalf of the truths which they now maintain. But are there not, among their opponents, some who have sacrificed what they once maintained, for the sake of material advantages, rank, wealth, and dignity, which they now enjoy? Are there none who have tampered with truths of which they are well convinced, but which they now pass over with a tender and hesitating step, who write

with a reserve more befitting the office than the opinions which they hold? To mention these by name would be ungracious, but the names will occur to those who are acquainted with the history of the theological discussions of the last thirty years—nay, perhaps, even of the last five.

Apart, however, from vapid declamation and thunderous vituperation, of which there is certainly no lack—apart from puerile condemnation affecting to be official, but fortunately, under the protection of the constitutional action of courts of appeal, as unproductive of effect as it is charged with malice and an impotent wish to inflict worldly damage on a peccant brother for a conscientious expression of firmly-rooted belief—apart, we say, from this, there is an argument or an allegation brought forward by the champion-defenders of the faith, which it may be well to notice here. They allege, then, that those, whom more we suppose for convenience sake than with any pretension to accuracy they class under the comprehensive terms of rationalists and neologists, do not deal fairly with these subjects. They say that these enemies of the faith apply one rule to sacred and another to profane history, and to facts as narrated in that history.* They maintain, and fairly, if they are speaking on profane and not on sacred inspiration principles, that the truth and substance of a history are not impugned by a few discrepancies in detail, a few self-contradictions, or the omission in contemporary writers of certain facts recorded in the history under consideration. They say that the *general* truth of the histories of Herodotus, Thucydides

* Even the Rev. J. W. Burgon says, *Inspiration and Interpretation*, "We desiderate nothing so much as 'searching inquiry.'" But, if the result of "searching inquiry" is hostile, what then?

and Livy is admitted, though there is no question that that of Herodotus contains innumerable "myths"; though Thucydides assumes as facts all the traditions of the Trojan wars; and though Niebuhr has shown, even though the existence of Romulus be admitted, how much that is mythical, poetical, and merely legendary has grown and clustered, like a parasitical plant* around his name and those of the so-called kings. No "Rationalist" has ever disputed this. But, then, he urges that the moment he begins to treat "sacred" history as if it *were* "profane" in accordance with the demand, his orthodox opponent immediately turns round upon him with the injunction to take his shoes from off his feet, for the place whereon he stands is holy ground. Orthodoxy is a powerful thing, but still must be bound by the rules of logic. It cannot blow hot and cold at once, nor can we do at once two opposite things. Is it fair to tell us to examine and to treat sacred and inspired history as if it were profane, and then, having done so, if we bring out unwelcome results, to tell us that *those* must be wrong because they jar with a theory of their own already assumed? In point of fact what we are required to do is the very thing that Strauss *has* done. He has treated sacred history as profane, and has subjected the Gospel history to exactly the same tests as he would have done any other. Having done so he has found, as might have been expected from the time at which, the circumstances under which, and the people among whom the Gospels took their rise, that there is much that is perfectly incredible, but that not all is so. If the orthodox party are satisfied with this result of the adoption of the advice they give, to treat sacred history as

* See Strauss's "New Life," § 100.

if it were profane, well and good ; we shall not quarrel with them on this account.

But it is, indeed, extraordinary that the champions of plenary inspiration, of the theory of "every chapter, every verse, every word, every letter," cannot see with how much danger to the edifice which they so tenderly support this theory is fraught. Especially is this the case in dealing with uneducated thinkers, for such there are, and those who, in spite of clerical terrors, *will* draw their own inferences and conclusions. It appears to have been by the unanswerable questions of these rough and ready but extremely inconvenient logicians that Bishop Colenso* was induced to investigate the legends of the Pentateuch with a view of convincing the sceptical Zulu of that which, probably, it will be found far more difficult to impress upon the orthodox Englishman, and more especially Englishwoman, that, in order to be a Christian in the most sublime and exalted sense of the term, it is not necessary to believe in absurdities and impossibilities. For Colenso saw, no doubt, that the train of reasoning which would pass through the mind of his Zulu would be something like this. "You, my teacher, tell me that in order to be religious I must believe the whole of what is contained in this book which you call the Bible. I have read it, but I find many things in it, told of God, whom you preach to me as All-knowing, All-merciful, All-good, and All-wise, which appear to me to be utterly at variance with this character. I read of Him as doing many things which, being as they are cruel and outrageous, you, my

* While translating the story of the Flood, I have had a simple-minded, but intelligent native—one with the docility of a child, but the reasoning powers of mature age—look up and ask, "Is all that true? Do you really believe," etc. Pref. to Part i., p. 9.

teacher, would rebuke and punish me for if I were to do the like. If, therefore, I cannot be religious without believing in this book, religious I cannot be, unless you can admit to me that these things which appear to me to be incredible are so, or show me that, in point of fact, I *need* not believe *them*, but that I am still bound to be religious." And the same may be said of the New Testament also.

Thus, we see that it was really in the interests of sound and practical morality that Colenso undertook his work. He wished to show to his Zulus that superstition and religion are not identical. The lesson which he wished to teach them, both negative and positive, was "to look for the sign of God's spirit speaking to them," not in the inspiration of particular narratives in the Bible, but "in that which speaks to the witness of God within them, to which alone, under God Himself, whose voice it utters in the secrets of his inner being, each man is ultimately responsible to the Reason and the Conscience."*

We turn now, in conclusion, and more particularly, to the work of Strauss itself. And though he himself has admirably explained in his twenty-fifth section the meaning of the term "myth," and the principle involved in the term, still, as it is the key-note to the whole, it may not be amiss to endeavour to give an explanation of it even more popular still, and in terms even more familiar than he does.

From some cause or other this word has been of late years more frequently heard in ordinary conversation than was formerly the case. But, as might have been expected, its real meaning has been gradually lost sight of, and it is used, not unfrequently, as synonymous with conscious or

* On the Pentateuch. Part I., p. 152.

wilful fiction or falsehood—*i.e.*, conscious exercise of the imagination or wilful assertion of that which is known not to be true. Now when English *hearers* about—I will not say *readers* of—Strauss's work, for with ordinary attention it would be impossible—understand that the "myth" is the fundamental principle of Strauss's theory, they probably infer, as was well observed by a late reviewer of the translation of the work in the "*Reader*," that, applying this principle to the principal Personage spoken of in the Gospels, Strauss altogether denies His existence, and supposes even that existence to be a fiction or invention on the part of the writers of the Gospels. Nothing can be further from the truth than this.

Whatever else we may suppose with regard to the condition of the Jews or the state of Palestine at the time of the appearance of Jesus, we *know*, at least, thus much from the description in Tacitus,* that in point of ignorance, superstition, and exclusive bigotry,† they had no equals in the Roman world. As a nation they could scarcely be said to have a common language. By some no doubt, in or in the neighbourhood of the capital, Hebrew was spoken; by others farther removed from it, Syriac; or, towards Tyre and Sidon, Phœnician; by the country-people, Aramaic; and by great numbers not improbably, a sort of patois made up of a combination of all these languages, and others with them, including, of course, Greek, which, as is shown by the Gospels and Epistles, was probably the language used in writing, perhaps in speaking too, by educated men like Luke, John, and Paul.‡ In a

* Hist., B. iv., c. 5.

† Adversus omnes alias hostile odium.—*Ibid.*

‡ We omit the names of Matthew and Mark, assuming the question to be still undecided as to the authorship of *their* Gospels. Not

country circumstanced as this was, the means of communication could not be but very difficult and slow. Indeed it appears to have been principally, if not entirely, on foot. And not more than one in a thousand, if so many, could be expected to have the power of recording facts in writing; and not a larger number, certainly, of reading them when recorded. It would, indeed, be a great chance whether a verbal narrative of an event that had happened in one district would be understood in another, or even in the same.

Contrast, now, in these respects, our own condition in these modern times. We live in an age of railways, telegraphs, and newspapers, instruments of conveyance for ourselves and for intelligence, the possibility of which a hundred years ago no human being could have conceived. And yet, remember, even with all this, the extreme difficulty of obtaining accurate information as to any one event, whether that event has happened 5,000 miles off, or within the boundaries of our own county, town, or parish. The event—the nucleus—may have really happened, or it may not; but, even if it has, how many untrue or “mythical” accessories have clustered round it before it comes to our ears? How many persons ever forward a piece of news to another exactly in the form in which they received it themselves? There are, indeed, but few events that happen that do not become, before they have passed through half-a-dozen mouths, distorted and coloured by the personal feelings and interests of the narrators, though they may be events but little open, it would appear, to such influences. But is it not also within the experience of every one that events are not only distorted, that it is settled with regard to Luke and John, but their names may be taken as representative of educated men.

exaggerated, and coloured, in every possible way, but that stories of supposed occurrences arise without the smallest foundation in fact, and in manners perfectly unaccountable? In this last case you have *myth* pure and unmixed; in the former the growth and development of it. So that, in point of fact, we ourselves, living men and living women, are ever living in the midst of myths; our telegrams are flashing myths along their wires every day; and our newspapers are circulating myths; and when we sift these myths, examine their evidence, and strip them of their clustering parasites till we arrive, if possible, at their central stem, also, perhaps, accounting for their origin—we are doing what Strauss has done for the Gospel history.

Nor is there about the term “myth,” when used in this way, anything mystical or transcendental. The minds of some, no doubt, when they hear the term, immediately turn to the elaborate mythology of the Greeks, Egyptians, and others, upon which such writers as Grote or Müller have spent so large an amount of elaborate learning and disquisition. But there is hardly anything in common between the mode in which natural powers become invested with forms and nomenclature, and the myths of which we have just been speaking. Some analogy there may be between the mode in which great men may, after death, have been converted into heroes in the technical sense, demons or demi-gods, as, for instance, a Romulus or a Cæsar, and others, and the immortalisation of Jesus; but, otherwise, the explanation of the term myth as used in Greek or Roman mythology will give but little assistance towards the understanding of it, as applied by Strauss to the interpretation of the phenomena in the New Testament.

In addition, however, to embellishment, decoration, and the successive accrements continually gathering round a narrative when once originated by probably unconscious fiction, Strauss discovers a fertile source of myths in the so-called prophecies of the Old Testament. When once the person of Jesus had been invested by His adherents with a supernatural character, when once He had come to be looked upon by His followers and worshippers as the Redeemer, nothing was more natural than that those among them, who were or had been Jews, should search among their ancient records, the only literature of which they were possessed, for texts applicable to Him, and which when thus applied were converted into predictions. It is not necessary to enlarge upon this point as it is one that is continually reappearing in Strauss's work, and the discussion of it, more especially in the second volume of the translation, forms a considerable part of the whole. But there is one case which it may be well to notice here, as it forms so striking an illustration of the case, and gives, even to the orthodox reader, alternatives of which, according to the simplest rule of common sense, he can choose but one. Which he chooses will signify but little to the critical investigator. We are told in Matthew, ii. 13, that in the earliest days of his infancy, Jesus was carried by his parents into Egypt in order to avoid the dangers arising from Herod and the catastrophe which followed in the massacre of "all the children from two years old and under." Now upon the fact that nothing is said by Luke of the massacre, we do not insist, as it is a well known law of evidence that omission is not contradiction. But unless a person can be in two places at the same time and be the subject in each of two separate lines of events, we do insist upon the fact that at the very same

time that Jesus is said by Matthew to have been carried away into Egypt, he is said by Luke, notwithstanding the terrors of the tyrant, to have remained and to have been at Jerusalem, and there to have been "presented" in the most public manner in the temple. Now at some time or other, it is uncertain when, Jesus was invested with the title of Son of God. Also, in the prophetic books the collective Israel is constantly spoken of by God, as represented by the Prophet, as His Son. Hence it happened that, not merely in the instance we are speaking of but in others also, what was originally said of Israel was taken in a Messianic sense and applied to Jesus as the Messiah. So in the case before us it happens that in Hosea, xi. 1, we find the following words: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt," referring, beyond all question, to the Exodus. But Matthew or the compiler of the legends recorded under the name of Matthew, found in the tradition which he followed, a journey into Egypt placed in connection with the so-called prophecy, and in the Judaising spirit which characterises him throughout, adopted it into his narrative. Thus we see the alternatives which are open to one who pins his faith upon the letter of the inspired text. Either he must admit that the tradition in the First Gospel arose from the (erroneous) identification of the "Son of God" with Jesus as the "Son of God," and consequently that the journey to Egypt never took place, being simply a "myth," originating in the words understood as a prediction, or if it did take place, then the narrative of Luke is mythical, and the events therein recorded are excluded by the exigences of time and place. That both should have taken place is simply impossible. There is nothing on which immediately to rest the narrative of Luke con-

sidered as a myth, and the probability therefore is that the events as told in Luke took place while those in Matthew are mythical. This probability becomes greater when we find the massacre also connected with a prophecy, and the tone of the whole narrative is more legendary, dark, and obscure.* We recommend the whole of the question, more especially as expounded in the note by extracts from a once celebrated work by a German writer, translated by one of our most distinguished scholars and

* On these narratives, that of the shepherds at Bethlehem and the presentation in the temple, and their incompatibility with the adoration of the Magi and the massacre at Bethlehem, and consequently the flight into Egypt, see Schleiermacher, p. 46, &c., English translation by Thirlwall, now Bishop of St. David's. Schleiermacher also observes, "The flight into Egypt (Matthew) is very naturally connected with the visit of the Magi * * * * but the journey to Jerusalem (for presentation in the temple, Luke) is inconsistent with it." Further on the writer observes: "The two traditions rest on a totally different tradition one from the other, as must strike every person who impartially considers each by itself. Luke supposes everywhere that before the birth of Jesus, which took place only accidentally at Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary lived at Nazareth; Matthew, on the contrary, knows nothing of any accidental cause" (the registration or taxing) "of the birth happening at Bethlehem, and clearly supposes that Joseph, but for the intervention of some particular circumstances, would have returned to *Judea* after his flight, and therefore manifestly takes that, and not Galilee, to have been his usual place of abode. All attempts to reconcile these two contradictory statements seem only elaborate efforts of art, to which one should not needlessly resort, or, indeed, should rather give no explanation of them at all. How then? Are we in general to pronounce the one series true and the other false, or how are we to extricate ourselves from the difficulty?" p. 48. "The corresponding members of the two successions (of narratives in Matthew and Luke) almost entirely exclude each other. Hence, then, if in any one point the narrative of one evangelist is correct, that of the other, so far as it relates to the same epoch, cannot be so." p. 44.

divines, now a bishop, to the attention and consideration of the advocates of plenary inspiration.

We will now conclude these "introductory remarks" with one or two additional observations, and one or two quotations. We feel sure that the advocates just spoken of, the champions of advanced orthodoxy, can have no conception of the damage they are doing to their cause and to the church which they profess and intend to support. Complaints are now made of the want of candidates for ordination, and more especially of candidates of a high order of intellectual power. Can any one doubt for a moment what the cause of this deficiency is? Is it to be expected that such candidates as those last named can shut their eyes to what is going on around them? Surely when they see the sort of theology they are expected to preach or be put under a ban by no inconsiderable number of their fellow countrymen; when they see the forced attempts at harmonising, the puerile interpretations, the trivial explanations of palpable inconsistencies which they are expected to adopt, they are more likely to be repelled from than attracted to the ranks of the Church. We give an instance of the second of these, by way of a specimen of that to which an intellect of no mean order *can* condescend when engaged upon these subjects. In a work called "The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, in the original Greek: with Introductions and Notes," by Dr. Wordsworth, Canon of Westminster, the following occurs; speaking of the wedding garment, in Matthew xxii. 11, the annotator says: "Particularly it means baptism as the germ of all the means of spiritual grace." The question addressed to the guest who was without it he considers as specially applied to those who reject the holy sacraments, and for the "Quakers

in particular" he says "it has a solemn and awful sense 'FRIEND (*italics in the original*) How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?' " After this, surely the force of folly could no further go!

We close at length with a quotation which all may apply to themselves who handle these subjects in a fair and fearless spirit. "My (our) great concern has been (is), to show to those who have inherited the culture of this age, that religion—that the Christian religion—is not responsible for the false interpretations of past" (the author might have said "or the present") "generations—that it is possible to believe in God and yet hold fast by one's scientific knowledge and convictions. You all know the sort of attacks my (our) attempt has brought down upon me (us). For myself (ourselves) I (we) heed them not any more than I (we) should heed the cobwebs that spread over the garden path on an autumn morning. When people use vituperative language, I am (we are) sorry for their poor morality. When they use illogical arguments and make irrelative quotations from Scripture, I am (we are) sorry their reasoning powers are not better developed. That is all. Why should I (we) be angry? If they could help it they would do differently." These are noble and courageous words, especially when we remember that they were spoken and are now published* in the metropolis of Puritanism and Sabbatarianism.

* "Divine Providence in its relation to Prayer and Plagues." By the Rev. James Cranbrook. Edinburgh. Second Edition.



STRAUSS AND RENAN.

WHEN the solution of the same problem is simultaneously undertaken by different individuals, it may be considered as a proof that the attempt to solve it is in accordance with the spirit of the time, and the more certainly so in proportion to the importance of the persons devoting themselves to that solution, and the confidence with which they may be credited with a right understanding of what the present time requires and is competent to perform. So far, the mere fact that two learned men like Strauss and Renan, quite independently of one another, considered that the time had arrived for undertaking a discussion of the life of Jesus, could not have failed to excite our attention in the highest degree. When, four years ago, Renan visited the Lebanon, and there wrote his first sketch of the "Life of Jesus," it was impossible that he should know that in Germany his celebrated predecessor had some time before returned to his New Testament investigations in order to supplement his earlier work by a fresh discussion of the historical matter of the Gospels. So, on the other hand, Strauss had already completed the greater portion of his work when that of the French critic began its brilliant career. But it was not merely a Life of Jesus in general which each undertook to write, but also a "*Popular Life of Jesus.*" And though only the German author added

to his title-page the distinguishing term of "popular," it was in the case of the French self-evident that his work was intended not merely for the learned but for the general reader. This popular destination of the two works is very characteristic of the religious conditions as well as of the education of the time. Our age will no longer submit to the theory that investigations so closely connected with the highest interests of mankind are to be dealt with as the exclusive property of one particular order of men. This age demands of theology, as well as of natural science and history, that its results shall be made public property, shall be devoted to the purposes of general enlightenment; and though in this department, as well as in the two others, only the expert can be in possession of all the principles, ideas, and methods requisite for the complete solution of the problems proposed, still people cannot persuade themselves that theologians are to pursue their calling with closed doors, to communicate to the public in general at the most a portion of the results at which they arrive, but, as to the course of their investigations and the grounds of their assumptions, only to give an account to those who are in a condition to work through the whole mass of their learned investigations. On the contrary, the more contradictory, in theological matters, the dicta of the professors are accustomed to be, so much the more justifiable appears the desire that these professors should condescend to permit a wider circle of educated men to inspect not merely the results at which they arrive, but also the processes and grounds by which and upon which they arrive at these results; that they should write not merely for learned men like themselves, but also for the people, and more especially for the educated portion of them. And this demand appears all the more fair, as

among our *people* the numbers are very considerable of those who are indeed without special theological knowledge, but who, in point of general education, of unprejudiced judgment, of exercise of extensive thought, are far in advance of the majority of professed theologians. Thus, Strauss expressly says that he intended his first "Life of Jesus" for theologians exclusively, but that he now writes for non-theologians, and has taken pains not in any single proposition to be unintelligible to any educated and thoughtful person among them; and that it is indifferent to him whether theologians choose to read him or not. As in the Acts of the Apostles Paul declares to his Jewish countrymen that as they despise him he will turn to the heathens, so here the critic says to his theological colleagues, that as they have not chosen to listen to him he attaches himself to the laity. Only it would be a great mistake to suppose that personal considerations alone induced him to discuss the life of Jesus for the German people. On the contrary, the allegation that he should have either not written at all, or exclusively for the learned, would involve no less an anachronism than that of those who, thirty years since, were so simple as to think that if he considered it his duty to write so dangerous a book he should have written it in Latin, so that, at all events, it might not have been read.

There are, indeed, great differences of degree in what is meant by the word *popular*. What appears to one person popular, another possibly may find very difficult; and what is popular in one country is not necessarily so in another. Everything depends upon the degree of general intelligibility to which the author proposes to attain—upon the class of readers upon which he reckons. How great, in this respect, is the difference between the German and

the French authors of the "Life of Jesus" is shown at the very beginning of the respective works of each by a characteristic feature. It happens, by a remarkable coincidence, that each dedicates his book to the memory of a deceased relative: Renan, "to the pure soul of his sister Henrietta, who died at Byblus on 24th September, 1861;" Strauss to his only brother, who had been a manufacturer at Cologne, and died at Darmstadt, 2nd February, 1863. The former puts the question to his sister, "now sleeping in the country of Adonis near the sacred Byblus," whether, in the bosom of God, she still remembers the day when his work was begun in her company and with her lively sympathy. The latter, in his dedication, which he had written as an address to the living and now prints as an invocation to the dead, says "that he conceives as among his readers men who, like his brother, unsatisfied with the gains of industry, hanker after spiritual things; who, after laborious days, find their best recreation in serious reading; who have the rare inclination, unconcerned about the ban of traditional belief and ecclesiastical ordinances, to think for themselves about questions of the utmost importance to mankind, and the still rarer intelligence to look upon even political progress, at all events in Germany, as not sufficiently secured until provision has been made for the deliverance of men's minds from religious delusion, for the purely human culture of the people." These two dedications express the whole difference between the two writings in purpose, in tenor, and in tone. It is the object of Renan's book—and, undoubtedly, not so much from intention as from agreement with the author's own peculiar taste—to be as welcome and intelligible to a reader of the female sex, and in particular of the French nation as to any reader whomsoever; and if we imagine

such a reader as possessed of the finest cultivation, the most intelligent mind, and the tenderest feeling, we shall not need to make any broad distinction between her qualities and those of her sex and nation generally in order to credit her with the power of following throughout complicated critical analysis with sympathy and intelligence; of calmly balancing, in the case of questions which make strong demands on the heart and imagination, all the grounds for and against; of preferring a thorough insight into the defects of our historical knowledge to belief in a pleasing supposition; of distrusting a comprehensive or striking feature simply because it admits of no historical proof; of thoroughly recognising and keeping in sight the peculiarity of primeval Christian views; of looking suspiciously at oratorical effects and modern sensibility in consequence of the damage done by them to historical truth. Strauss, on the other hand, addresses himself to men who indeed do not require to have engaged in learned studies, but who are penetrated sufficiently with the spirit of German science not to shrink from mental labour however serious and continuous; who would wish to be acquainted not only with the results of scientific investigation, but also, more than superficially, with the grounds of those results; to whom beauty of form is no reason for being more easily satisfied with the internal substance, and whom the attractiveness of a combination cannot bribe into acquiescence with defects of proof. Renan's exposition also is grounded upon sufficient preliminary labours, which is only what might be expected in an author of such distinguished learning; but still we cannot compare him with Strauss as regards accuracy in his use of the original sources; and the results of modern German

criticism, especially, to say nothing of Strauss's first "Life of Jesus," of Baur's profound investigations, are neglected by him in a manner which, as we shall find, is, in his work, deeply avenged. If, moreover, the French critic has an advantage as compared with the German, in the fact that not only did the nature of his occupation place him in immediate contact with the East, but that he also had the opportunity of surveying the theatre of the Evangelical history, and if he knew how to appreciate the latter circumstance at its full value, especially for the solution of his problem, we cannot on the other hand overlook two things, the first that in this behoof Renan not unfrequently makes too much of his advantage, and ascribes to the rural charms of Galilee an influence upon the spiritual culture of the mind of Jesus which we could scarcely admit even if it were not religious but artistic greatness that was in question; the next, that there is in Strauss and in an incomparably greater degree, an exigency of Evangelical criticism, a philosophical insight into the peculiarity of religious consciousness, a psychological insight into the motives and development of religious conceptions, an unerring judgment as to what was possible and what was impossible in the circles from which the Evangelical narratives come down to us, a subtlety of scientific appreciation saving him from much that in the case of Renan must offend an enlightened view of history. Lastly, if we enquire as to the mode in which each has dealt with his problem in detail, it cannot be overlooked that Renan's book answers far more fully to the ordinary demand on popularity than that of Strauss. Even in point of extent, the latter is, taking into consideration its extremely close print, three times the size of the former, and exceeds the other by

at least as much in the richness of its contents and the thoroughness with which it deals with its subject. A hundred questions, only slightly touched by Renan, or which he decides with a few general assertions, often very striking and intelligent, but still too hasty and precipitate, are thoroughly discussed by Strauss; of the development and present state of Gospel criticism he gives us a sketch which we shall look for in vain in Renan, as well as for the investigations instituted by him into the origin and motive of the Evangelical narratives. Every decision is preceded by a careful balancing of the grounds on which it rests; and if we are not thereby enabled to maintain the historical nature of a feature, he prefers a *non liquet* or a hypothesis which openly confesses its own uncertainty to narrating as a fact what cannot be proved to be such. It is indeed true that by so doing he abandons an advantage which undoubtedly contributed no little to the unheard of success of Renan's work, and in which, in fact, lies its principal charm; that thorough-going individualisation, that freshness of representation which though leading us in detail upon uncertain ground, does still in its general impression, like a successful historical painting, not seldom place in a striking light the scene of Evangelical history and the spirit of the acting personages; he gives up those fine pencil-strokes by which the French historian understood how to freshen up the figure of his hero and to give to the pale forms of antiquity the appearance of warm reality. But he also abandons those random combinations, those uncertain, in place seven perfectly groundless, suppositions with which Renan fills up the gaps in credible tradition; all that romantic decoration, that false pathos, that sensibility of the nineteenth century with which Renan has invested

the founder of Christianity and his surroundings; those rhetorical exaggerations, those musical flowers which cannot be translated into German and be listened to with the smallest toleration; as, for instance, when the composer of the Book of Daniel is called "*vrai créateur de la philosophie de l'histoire*" (p. 37),* or, when Jesus is represented to us as "*foulant aux pieds tout ce qui est de l'homme, le sang, l'amour la patrie*" (p. 43), or when Renan asserts that the history of the origin of Christianity is a "*délicieuse pastorale*" (p. 67), and the like. Strauss' representation may, in comparison with Renan, seem meagre and colourless; where the latter describes things to us as if he had been present on the spot, the former not unfrequently finds himself compelled to make the unwelcome admission that the real course of events is altogether unknown to us: where the one professes to tell us accurately what the persons suffered and did, under what circumstances and impressions they developed themselves, the other is often perfectly satisfied if he can succeed in explaining the historical consequences from the general circumstances of the period and the country; in giving a view approximately correct from the main features of the course of history. But whoever looks for strict historical truth will certainly fare better with the historical solidity of the German critic than with the genial superficiality of the French; and if to the latter he will not deny the praise of a most attractive and graceful form, of clear, sparkling and flowery language, of artistically finished execution, he will not thus allow himself to be seduced into expecting similar ornamentation from a work to the weighty contents of which it would be but little suitable, and to bestow less admiration upon the well-tried master-

* The references are to the French edition of Renan.

hand with which Strauss has been able as an author to control an immense amount of material, to make the most complicated analysis transparently clear, to bring innumerable particulars under the dominant point of view, to distribute light and shade, to say the most important things in the most terse and simple language, to find unhesitatingly the most characteristic expression for every thought.

If we would examine more accurately the contents of these two remarkable works, we cannot of course undertake to give a detailed account of the plan and results of writings which have been long in everybody's hands, or to explain all the individual questions, the discussion of which would require a third volume of the size of that of Strauss. We must rather be content to bring out those salient points upon which will especially depend the formation of an opinion upon the character and mutual relation of the two works, and upon the state of historical investigation into the Gospels as indicated by them.

The first question which here meets us is that as to the sources of the Gospel history. It is well known that Baur characterised it as the main defect of Strauss' earlier "Life of Jesus," that it gives a criticism of the Gospel History without a criticism of the Gospels; and this remark has since been not only incessantly repeated, but has been not unfrequently, and even in the presence of Strauss' last work, followed up in a spirit so one-sided that the critic has been absolutely met by the objection that he should have abandoned his whole undertaking until he had settled satisfactorily the question as to the origin of the Gospels, as to which of the Evangelists wrote first and which last, what sources each made use of, to which decade each writing belongs, etc. This last point is mani-

festly an exaggeration, and the question such as every successive discussion of the "Life of Jesus" would adjourn indefinitely; for they are questions which will never be cleared up, and an agreement about them never be reached. But even Baur's own suggestion, though well grounded in itself, may be met by answering that, conversely, no criticism of the Gospels is possible without a criticism of the Evangelical history, and that no one, who for the last thirty years has attentively and intelligently followed the course of these investigations, will be able to close his eyes to the fact that the criticism of the Gospel history which Strauss completed in his first "Life of Jesus" was the first thing that levelled the road for more searching investigations as to the tendency, the plan, and the origin of the Gospels. For so long as the extent of the unhistorical element in these writings was uncertain, no certainty was attainable as to whether they might come from eye-witnesses or not; whether these authors had, in composing them, historical truth in view, or further dogmatic purposes; in what way, and how far they allowed themselves to be influenced by these purposes; how free or how dependent was the position in which they stood towards the Evangelical tradition, etc. The objection of Baur is nevertheless recognised as just by Strauss himself on the very question on which he himself lays the greatest weight, the question, that is, as to the Gospel of John. He says that no one should interfere with a single word in the discussion of these points until he has come to an understanding about John and his relation to the other Evangelists; and that it is Baur who throws the clearest light upon this fundamental question, who has taken up the battle against the Gospel of John, and fought it out in a manner in which critical battles are rarely fought out; and this, he says,

entitles Baur to imperishable fame (p. 141).^{*} In all essential points he himself adheres to Baur's views with regard to the fourth Gospel. He remarks, indeed, and not unjustly, that Baur sometimes identifies the thoughts of the Evangelist with the forms of modern speculations, and thereby idealises them; but he agrees with him in considering the Gospel as a free-hand religious fiction, of which the leading thought is the Logos idea, a fiction which, having had its rise at a stirring period of theological and ecclesiastical movements, in the times of Gnosis and Montanism, of disputes about the Passover, and of the development of the doctrine of the Logos, about the middle of the second century, carries in itself marks of these various efforts, but embraces them under a higher unity: he not only agrees, finally, with Baur's indication of the stand-point from which the Evangelist might consider himself justified, not indeed in unequivocally characterising himself as the bosom-disciple of Jesus, but in insinuating he was so; not only does he agree with this indication, but he calls it expressly the crown of Baur's treatise, a magnificent proof of close and penetrating criticism which must exercise upon every one who is competent to follow it a profound and really poetical effect.

Far less importance is attributed by Strauss to the investigation into the Synoptics; nor can I contradict him if he is of opinion that Gospel criticism has during the last twenty years somewhat run to seed, and the whole investigation become so extensive by the crowd of hypotheses pressing in, that the main question itself, that of the Evangelical History, will scarcely ever be brought to a decision if the solution is to be waited for until this battle is ended; but that this is not necessary, inasmuch as many

^{*} The references are to the English translation.

of the essential points in the Gospel History may be cleared up without its being by any means settled whether Matthew wrote in Hebrew or in Greek—a collection of sayings or a Gospel; whether Luke had before him Mark and Matthew, or Mark, Matthew and Luke. Thus much at least may be established without difficulty, and must, indeed, be established anterior to any further investigation into the Gospel History, that the external evidences furnish us with no warrant that any one of the three first Gospels was composed by an Apostle or a disciple of an Apostle; that, on the contrary, the very evidence of Papias himself (the oldest witness), about the year 120 A.D., to professed writings of Matthew and Mark is absolutely inapplicable to *our* Gospels of Matthew and Mark.*

Quite as easily it may be shewn that each of these Gospels contains unhistorical accounts and narratives in great number; that, consequently, none of them is an original and thoroughly reliable source. But their relation, in this respect, to one another—which, comparatively speaking, may claim the greatest originality—how far the unhistorical accounts were delivered to them by others, or fresh framed by their authors by modification of tradition, if not by free invention of their own—these are questions which can only be decided by criticism of the accounts in question following internal traces: but their solution is

* Even by Tischendorf's pretentious and superficial pamphlet, "When were the Gospels composed?" Leipsig, 1865, neither this result nor our view of the external attestation to the Gospel of John is in any way shaken. The most in this pamphlet is nothing more than a repetition, in a very confident tone, of apologetic observations long since controverted; while what the composer has lately added is so untenable, that it cannot cause any serious difficulties whatever to any one who has surveyed this department with a critical eye.

so much the less indispensable as even a representation, on the whole later and at second-hand, may have preserved the original tradition in a purer form, or restored it by removing individual and legendary component parts. However desirable, therefore, it must always be to arrive at the most perfect and certain solutions possible of these questions, and whatever light may be reflected from these solutions upon individual features of the Gospel history, still the answer to them is not of such important influence upon the solution of the critico-historical problem that the latter can be said to be dependent upon the former. Such dependence could only be maintained if it were shewn that some one of our synoptic Gospels is governed to the same extent as that of John, by ideal points of view, and stands in a position of similar freedom to tradition; but those who are acquainted with the subject are agreed that this is not the case.

But if Strauss puts only a conditional value upon this investigation, still he has not, so far as the plan of his work allowed, entirely withdrawn from it. In the result at which he arrives, he comes, in the main, to the view which Baur adopted, and to which the majority of his pupils, though with important variations in detail, have adhered. He looks upon Matthew as the most ancient, and, comparatively speaking, the most trustworthy of our Gospels. In particular, he thinks that the speeches of Jesus are, in him, not indeed unmixed with later additions and modifications, but still more genuine than in the others. Moreover, that the matter of fact appears here in general in its simplest and most original form; and that a further proof of its originality is to be found in the stamp of Jewish nationality which it bears. He is, however, not prepared to deny that even this representation

of the history, as given in Matthew, is only secondary, and drawn, at all events in part, from different and more ancient memoranda, from the continuous use of which both the repetitions and the contradictions which appear in this Gospel are to be explained. That the Gospel did not receive its final touches until a comparatively late period, Strauss concludes more especially from the baptismal formula, Matt. xxviii. 19, echoing, as it does, the later ecclesiastical ritual. He agrees with others in assuming that Luke made use of Matthew, and probably also one or other of the original sources which the latter had before him, and to this he thinks many of the features are to be ascribed, in which Luke differs from Matthew, even in the case of those narratives which, in their main subjects, coincide with those of Matthew. At the same time he is of opinion that Luke not only worked up the tradition which he found ready at hand as an independent author, but also modified it in the sense of universalistic Paulinism, and supplemented it by narratives with this tendency; but in doing so he did not deal so freely with it as the fourth Evangelist, to whom, in other respects, he stands nearer than any of the other synoptics: the peculiarity of his method consists rather in this (as Strauss, p. 123, convincingly proves) that he gives a hearing to the opposite opinion, he does not feel himself to be the man to melt up again and remould altogether the Evangelical tradition, but is content with bringing it into another shape by analysis, re-modelling and elaboration. That he wrote later than Matthew is proved even by the turn which he gives to the eschatologic* prophecy in Matthew xxiv. 29. Mark, as has been assumed almost universally since the time of Griesbach, and especially by

* *i.e.* about the end of the world.

Baur, is supposed to be so far dependent upon Matthew and Luke, that his work is to be considered as an extract from theirs, enriched by only a few additions from them—an extract, the peculiarity of which consists mainly in its dogmatic neutrality, in the mode in which the speech-element is subordinated to the narrative, in the exaggerated and wilder conception of the idea of miracle, in the more sensuous painting and more garish colouring of many of the events. This view, however, has been for some time opposed by the other, espoused in part by learned men of note, according to which Mark, on the contrary, is supposed to have been the common source of the two other synoptics, and the most reliable authority for the original Evangelical tradition. So, for the last few years, Mark has become the fashion, and there is scarcely an historical excellence which might not be discovered in him, from the exemplary historical arrangement and purely human image of Christ to the “brightness of the early flower” which shone upon Ewald so convincingly in Mark’s Apocryphal accounts of miracles. On this point, however, many preferred the assumption, not that Mark is himself the original Evangelist, but only the one who allowed himself the fewest variations from the original Evangelist. Strauss is as little able now, as before, to follow this view. He continues to look upon the later composition of Mark, and his dependence upon Matthew, as undeniable: that, with Matthew, he also used Luke and compounded his Gospel out of the two others appears to him at least very probable; and he likewise coincides with Schwegeler and Baur, in the assumption that the leading idea of his work is the intention of giving not merely a shorter representation of the Evangelical history, but one in which everything that could give offence on one side or another, on all points in dispute between the Heathen and Jewish

Christian party, might, as much as possible, be passed over in silence; and he thinks also that with this is connected the fact, which betrays also the taste of a later period, that Mark lays so much more stress on the narratives, and especially on the miracles, than on the speeches, shortening the latter, lengthening the former by full description and exaggerating them by peculiar features of a miraculous character. Finally, Strauss is quite correct in drawing attention to the points of contact between Mark and John, which prove that one of these writers who, in this case, can only have been John, had the other before his eyes.

It is, of course, impossible in this place to test these views in any degree exhaustively. If, however, I am to express my opinion in brief, I cannot but declare myself as in the main, and with a few modifications in detail, agreeing with the theory here set forth as to the origin and character of our Gospels. In the first place it will be, at the present day, almost universally admitted, and certainly by all those who are competent to decide, that the Evangelical History was propagated, for a considerable period, only in the way of oral tradition. Among the first disciples and worshippers of Jesus, there existed no learned men and no authors: on the contrary, the learned and the literary of his nation had turned from him with hatred and contempt. A society, newly formed, standing in the midst of the most exciting conflicts and the most profound religious excitement, was a soil the least favourable that can be conceived for the writing of history. A society, looking every day for the end of the world, feeling no loftier desire than that for the coming of the Lord in the clouds, could have no motive for representing the image of its earthly life in written descriptions, for a posterity upon which, considering the near approach of

the conclusion of the present course of the world, they could no longer reckon ; but, as far as a wish was excited to learn anything of the speeches, the acts, and the destinies of that Lord, those who felt that wish adhered to the living word, to which, even in the second century, a Papias attributes an incomparably higher value than to the written tradition, inasmuch as its credibility is guaranteed to him by the personality of those who were questioned by him. It was not until the Apostolical generation had gradually died out, not until decades of years had passed since the departure of Jesus, that written memoranda about His life and doctrine were felt to be a desideratum. But at this period, by reason of the nature of all merely oral tradition, not merely unhistorical elements in great numbers might and must have penetrated into the Gospel history, many genuine features have been lost or have slipped into oblivion, but the whole frame of the history must have been loosened, and its natural organism broken up into a disarranged mass of separate narratives. For if, in a general way, it is only the skill of the writer which can form a comprehensive biography, give a connected view of a long historical career, while, on the contrary, on artless remembrance only particulars impress themselves, and in artless tradition only these propagate themselves, much more must this be true of religious tradition, far removed as this is, by its very nature, from all historical pragmatism, from all explanation of sequence in connection with natural causes, and for which that alone has any value from which an express reference to religious life can be gained. What, therefore, oral tradition about Jesus presented, cannot have been a connected representation of His history, but only a number of separate stories and speeches. Among the former we must assume to have been placed,

together with the main facts of the death and the resurrection, principally miraculous histories and those occurrences which were the occasions of an important saying; among the latter, not prolix developments of doctrine, but, in part, short and pregnant expressions with an epigrammatic point; in part, those parables of an attractive nature and easy to be remembered, which were besides so agreeable to the Jewish taste, and propagated themselves from mouth to mouth. And just for this reason it was impossible that the oral tradition could be the origin of entire biographies, like our Gospels, or of anything more than short and imperfect memoranda, which even Strauss justly considers as the first beginning of Evangelical literature; combinations of speeches and occurrences without any claim to biographical completeness and strict chronology, something after the manner, though far from reaching to the extent, of the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon; and this is expressly confirmed by the most ancient testimony about the Evangelical writings which we possess, the declaration of Papias, preserved for us by Eusebius in his *Church History* (iii. 39) in Papias' own words. For, instead of our four Gospels, this ancient bishop knows only two writings, the first of which was attributed to the Apostle Matthew, the other to Mark the companion of Peter: a collection, written in Hebrew, of "Utterances of Christ," and a Greek account "of his speeches and acts." Now if it is certain, with regard to the first of these writings, that it can have been neither the original work of our Matthew, nor a perfect Gospel at all, so also with the accounts which we have of the second, a most inadmissible freedom must be taken, in order to find in it our own Mark, or even a basis in the main corresponding to it. For, in the first place, the speeches

in it appear to have been by far the most important part; as Papias describes its contents, at first indeed as consisting of the speeches and acts of the Lord, but afterwards as of "the speeches" only; and, as it was supposed, to have borrowed these contents from the lectures of Peter, who in his preaching of the Christian doctrine had, at all events, far more occasion to give an account of the doctrinal speeches and parables of his Master than of those miracles with which our Mark is filled, and which a personal disciple and companion of Jesus, however superstitious we may imagine him to have been, could only have narrated to a very small extent. In our Mark, on the contrary, the speech-element, as compared with the occurrences, and especially with the miracles, is kept so strikingly in the back-ground, that even the most zealous champion of his originality could only explain the phenomenon by the groundless assumption that he intentionally passed over most of the speeches, because, anterior to the time of his writing, they had been already noted down by Matthew (but in Aramaic, and consequently not for the Greek readers of Mark); and that, on the other hand, learned Jews eagerly caught up the hypothesis of Mark, in order, by means of it, to support the proposition, does indeed in itself contradict all historical possibility, and destroys all true relation between cause and effect: that Jesus had in his doctrine nothing distinctive or peculiar; was nothing else but a Jew of the Pharisaic party; and did not differ in anything from the heads of it at Jerusalem but in a more defective culture and a greater amount of religious fanaticism. Thus Papias expressly remarks that the sayings and deeds of Christ were told in the Writing of Mark, "not in order," but as he had them from occasional mention in the lectures of Peter; and whether much or little

credit is to be given to the statement, it proves at least thus much, that the writing of Mark, which Papias knew, not only differed from the arrangement of the speeches in the collection of Matthew (which cannot itself have been a biography in progressive chronological order), but that it had not, generally, the form of a regular narrative about the life and teaching of Jesus—that the particular sayings and portions of narrative in it were not strung upon the thread of chronology or any other external thread, but only quite loosely put together. To our Mark, whom his friends praise for the very reason that he, more than any other Evangelist, gives us a picture of the regular series of events, and of the progressive development of an historical career, and who, apart from this exaggeration, does at all events unmistakeably exhibit an *intention* to give a continuous and regular narrative, and varies from the arrangement of Matthew only in a few and unimportant particulars — to this Gospel of Mark of ours, that mentioned by Papias, as regards its form, must have stood in much the same relation as Eckermann's Conversations with Göthe to the biography of him by Lewis.

Who then was the first to compile a complete representation of the Evangelical History from these and other similar memoranda, and from parallel oral tradition continually developing itself? This we are unable to say. But it cannot be assumed that it was one of our four Evangelists. Not merely because Luke, probably the second of them in point of antiquity, expressly makes mention of "many" Gospels which were in existence in his time; because, moreover, it may be proved that Justin made use of at least one Gospel-writing besides our Matthew and Luke; because we also know, from other sources, of a whole series of Gospels apart from our own,

which were current before the middle of the second century; but, above all, for the reason that our Gospels themselves can only be fully explained on the assumption that there were at the time of their coming into existence, besides these short collections of speeches and narratives, one or more complete histories of Jesus. For if not only in the main substance of their accounts, but also in the sequence of events detailed in them, and in individual expressions, sometimes Matthew and Mark coincide in differing from Luke, sometimes Luke and Mark from Matthew, or Matthew and Luke from Mark, or if the one of them whom, on other accounts, we cannot help considering the latest, appears, nevertheless, in particular cases, to give the most original form of a narrative—this relation cannot be rightly explained merely by supposing the use of one of these writers by a second and both by the third, whichever of them we consider to have been the first, and in whatever order we derive the others from him; on the contrary, we find ourselves continually driven to the supposition that the later of them had before them, wholly or in part, together with the earlier, also the original sources from which these latter drew; and as the traces of those original sources run through all parts of the Evangelical history, there is every probability that even the oldest of our Gospels was preceded by at least one, and probably by more than one, exposition of similar extent and character. If, therefore, we are to give the title of "Original Gospel" to the first exposition of that kind, but which likewise, according to all that precedes, can only have been of a derivative character, and in no degree a strictly original source of history, we shall not find this unchanged in any of our Gospels; but the question will only be which of them *relatively* restores it

most faithfully, which of them on the whole, together with what is legendary and unhistorical, of which there is plenty in all, gives comparatively the most reliable image of the founder of our religion, of his doctrine and his destinies. Now that, in this respect, the Gospel of John does not come under consideration is placed, scientifically speaking, beyond all question by all discussion that has taken place since Baur's decisive investigation into the question; and as to this I can now, as I did twenty years ago, only adhere to all the essential results of that investigation; and this acknowledgment is not in the smallest degree prejudiced by the admission that Baur does not, perhaps, explain in a manner perfectly correct every single feature of the Johannine representation, that he has occasionally obliterated the simplicity of the artistic process of the Evangelist by over-complex reflections—brought into too little prominence the importance which the external element of the Evangelical history, in spite of his idealism, always had in the eyes of its author; and that in all these respects the subtle remarks of Strauss upon this most sensuous, supersensuous Gospel (e.g. Vol. I., p. 187, Vol. II., pp. 393, 415), make a valuable supplement to those of Baur. Luke is far from dealing with the traditionary matter as freely as John does; but still it is unquestionable that even he made very important alterations in it, and in particular cases (as especially, chapter x., in the narrative of the seventy disciples) took the older representation, traces of which we can follow much more clearly in Matthew, and not only enriched it by further traditional elements, but also unhesitatingly modified it in accordance with practical and dogmatic interests. With the remarks which in this respect Strauss makes upon the tendency and procedure of Luke, I can agree the more

entirely as the substance of them completely coincides with the view which I have given in my work upon the Acts of the Apostles. Modern investigators are, without exception, agreed upon the point that in Luke we are to look neither for the original Gospel itself nor for a faithful copy of it; that he is later than Matthew is proved to demonstration, independent of everything else, by the passage, chapter xxi. 24, compared with Matthew xxiv. 29; for while Matthew stands sufficiently near to the destruction of Jerusalem not to hesitate to adopt into his Gospel the prophecy, that "immediately" after it the Son of Man shall appear in the clouds, Luke interposes between these two events the "time of the heathen," during which Jerusalem is to be in their power, and does not expect the second coming of Christ until after the expiration of this interval. It has, lastly, been of late maintained on several grounds that Luke did not make use of Matthew, but only Matthew's predecessor, the "original Evangelist." But on an accurate comparison of the two writings, no doubt upon this point appears to be possible, as Luke, in so many cases, adheres not only to the narrative but also to the expressions of Matthew, that the latter must have resembled his predecessor almost to the extent of being indistinguishable from him, if we are to attribute all these points of resemblance only to the use of a common original source.

Far more doubtful is, as has been remarked, the question as to the relation of Mark to the two other synoptics. But however great the zeal and ingenuity that has been called forth to prove that not the others have been used by him, but he by the others; or, that at least, according to another turn—of the three Gospels dependent upon one another, that of Mark is the most ancient, and stands

nearest to the genuine "original Gospel" of Mark, the disciple of Peter; still I do not think that the suspicions opposed to this view ever have been, or ever will be, successfully disarmed. Even the external evidence with regard to the existence of our second Gospel, is decidedly unfavourable to it. We can point to the first and third, at any rate about the middle, or before the middle of the second century, in the hands of Justin Martyr, the third in those also of the Gnostic Marcion: of Mark no sure trace is found either elsewhere about this time, nor even in Justin; for the only notice capable of being referred to it, the mention of "Sons of thunder" (Mark iii. 17,) is quoted by Justin himself, not as from our Gospel of Mark, but from the "memorabilia of Peter," *i.e.* the memoranda known to Papias, and professedly written down by Mark from the lectures of Peter. But if Justin, who lived in Rome, was not acquainted with our Gospel which, according to all appearance, took its rise in this city, or at all events in Italy, or at least did not use it in the same way as he used the two other synoptics, it cannot in his time have enjoyed any particular celebrity, and must have been far removed from being generally correct. Moreover, the supposition that we have the most faithful specimen of the original evangelical history in a writing which strikingly neglects precisely the main point, the doctrine of Jesus; and instead of this, collects the miracles with an obvious preference, and enlarges them with exaggerated legendary features—this supposition is not only improbable in itself, but it is also difficult to reconcile it with the fact that, in the most ancient records about the history of Christ, of which we hear through Papias, it is rather his speeches upon which stress is exclusively laid, and that Justin likewise only seldom mentions the

miracles, but returns to the sayings of Jesus in every page of his writings. Moreover, the champions of the priority of Mark find themselves, in particular points, compelled to make the admission that, in those points, he left out or altered component parts of the original Evangelical tradition; that, *e.g.*, the Sermon on the Mount, which is entirely wanting in him, and with it the narrative, also wanting in Mark, about the Capernaum Captain, cannot have been wanting in the "original writing;" that the short and colourless mention of the temptation of Christ supposes a fuller narrative, such as we read in Matthew and Luke, that Mark (chapter vi. 3,) was offended on dogmatic grounds with the term "Son of Joseph," or "Son of the Carpenter," as Jesus, in Luke and Matthew is called by the Nazarenes, and therefore changed it into "Son of Mary." But how, then, can a writer to whom such radical alterations in the "original record" are attributed, unless we have before us convincing proofs of the contrary, be at once and on other grounds preferred to the others? and what right have we to reject as inconceivable the notion of a dependence of him upon them; while still, in such instances as those alleged, it must be admitted that he was capable of taking accounts such as theirs, and partly from dogmatic, partly from literary motives, working out of them such a representation as he gives? If, finally, Mark is to be considered as the oldest of our Gospels, this assumption will be irreconcilable with the circumstance that (to pass over chapter ix. 1, 13, 37,) in chapter xiv. 24, he transfers, like Luke, only in more indefinite expressions, to a later period, the marvellous signs of a second coming of Christ, which Matthew connects immediately with the destruction of Jerusalem. And if it is denied that he used one of

the others; or, conversely, if he is supposed to have been used by them, then the question arises as to how it is to be explained that Mark gives so remarkably little of his own, that not only the almost entire substance of his accounts, but very frequently their verbal form is found repeated, sometimes in Matthew, sometimes in Luke, often even in both. Now if it is not to be assumed that Mark used them, then only one of two things remains: either they must both have made use of Mark, or all three must have used the same fundamental record. But none of these assumptions satisfies the cases in which Mark not merely agrees generally with one of the two other synoptics, or exhibits a compound from both, but in which his text at the same time exhibits phenomena which cannot be explained in a writer working independently, but only in one who had older representations before him, and neglected to smooth over in an intelligent manner these roughnesses which so readily result from the appropriation and application of foreign material. When, for example, Mark, ch. i. 2, attributes to Isaiah a passage of the prophet Malachi, applied to John the Baptist, this is most naturally explained by the assumption, that with the passage from Isaiah, which Matthew, and Luke also here quote, he incautiously connected a second passage from a prophet which is quoted by the same writers in a different connection (Matthew xi, 10, Luke vii. 27), likewise, with reference to John, but without the name of the prophet from whom it is taken. In ch. iii. 13, he agrees with Luke (ch. vi. 13,) in representing the election of the twelve Apostles as having been made upon the mountain, immediately before the sermon (omitted by him); and in the list of them passes most irregularly from one construction to another, followed by Luke, and

at the same time describes the commissioning of the Apostles in words which, in Matt. x. 1, and Luke ix. 1, stand in a different and far more appropriate connection; the words themselves exhibiting a mixture of the text of both of them. In this case it is difficult to believe that he fell upon this composition of elements entirely independent of the other writers. We find these elements manifestly in them in their original places, and Mark himself, chap. vi. 7, plainly shows to what place they properly belong. In chap. iii. 22, he tells us that when Jesus, after the election of the disciples, was thronged by the people in a house, the Scribes of Jerusalem objected to him that he cast out devils by the chief of them. But this unconnected narrative only becomes intelligible by means of Matthew chap. xii. 22, where that reproach is connected with a casting out of a devil. In chap. xiv. 65, it is said that the servants of the Sanhedrim put a covering over the face of Jesus, struck Him, and cried out to Him, "Prophecy." It is manifest that we have here abbreviated, until it is unintelligible, what is found in Luke, chap. xxii. 64; Matt. xxvi. 68, "Prophecy who it is that struck thee." Matthew and Luke cannot, therefore, have their account from Mark, and as the latter uses in part expressions of Matthew, in part those of Luke, he can only have taken his from them. Mark xv. 37, says that Jesus departed with a loud cry, that the curtain of the temple was rent in twain, that when the centurion on guard saw that he departed with such a cry (according to another reading shorter, but evidently to the same purport, "that he departed so,") he cried out, This man was truly the Son of God. When Mark says this every reader must indeed ask himself, how any one, and especially a Roman centurion, could have taken an executed malefactor for

the Son of God, for the Jewish Messiah, because before His decease He uttered a loud cry, or how any writer could have attributed such a belief to such a motive. This strange feature is only intelligible to us when we remember that Matthew does indeed also, chap. xxvii. 50, speak of the loud cry before the decease, and of the rending of the curtain; but adds, "and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose," etc.; "Now, when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, and said, 'Truly this was the Son of God.'" Here there is a sufficient motive for the expression of the centurion in the preceding material miracles. Mark, as well as Luke, omits these miracles (probably on account of the resurrection of the dead, which he did not choose should precede that of the "first-fruits of them that slept"), but he does not wish to dispense with the recognition of Christ by the centurion; and, consequently, as he could not have witnessed the rending of the curtain of the Temple, the only remaining ground for such recognition, the only striking circumstance in the case of the dying person for the centurion to observe, was the loud cry uttered by the former.

A series of further examples, and in particular of those in which the text of Mark can be explained only on the supposition of its being compounded of those of the two other synoptics, is given by Strauss, p. 174, vol. 1. But the explanation that Mark, in all these cases, had before him not the two other Evangelists, but the "fundamental record," common to him and them—this explanation is indeed opposed by many other considerations, but is also

especially inadmissible in those passages in which heterogeneous features and modes of expression, which are separate in our texts of Matthew and Luke, are combined in Mark. For example, in one of the instances above quoted, Mark introduces in two places what Matthew and Luke mention only in one, and that the only suitable place, with regard to the commission of the Apostles, and in reference to one department of this commission, the expulsion of devils, agrees on one occasion with Luke, ix. 1, in speaking of devils, and on another of "unclean spirits;" with Matthew x. 1, there are two suppositions possible, and both equally improbable. The first is, that the "fundamental record" also had these passages in two places, and the second, that it gave in one of them two descriptions of the circumstance of which Matthew borrowed from it one, Luke the other. On the contrary, it is perfectly manifest that Mark made use of the two other synoptics: the account of the commission of the Apostles to heal the sick and to drive out devils, which *they* place later, *he* transposes to an earlier place (chap. iii. 14, *before* the sermon on the Mount), only because he followed Luke (who had a motive for this in the whole scheme of his work,) in assigning this place to the list of the Apostles, but found that account in Matthew, combined with the list of the Apostles; and as, in consequence of this, chap. vi. 7, he was obliged once more to repeat it, he chose for the later passage the expression of Matthew, while in the first he has that of Matthew combined with that of Luke. Mark has a great liking for cases of driving out devils. In consequence of this he describes more miracles of this sort than Matthew, and even more than Luke, but does not give one of his own that is not to be found either in Matthew or in Luke.

Thus it cannot be assumed that the latter borrowed their narratives from Mark independent of each other, or from Mark's fundamental record; for in this case what should have occasioned Matthew only to omit those which Luke adopted, and Luke only those which Matthew adopted? Quite as little that one of them used, beside Mark, (*qy.* the fundamental Mark?) the other as well, and then purposely repeated those cases of driving out devils, which the other did not give; for, if he was concerned about completeness in the case of such miracles, why should he have passed over others which both his predecessors gave, and which were, therefore, better accredited; or, if he was only concerned with supplementing the earlier descriptions, have repeated those which he found already in both? On the contrary, the fact can only be explained on the supposition that Mark had Matthew and Luke before him, and selected what was agreeable to him. It is the same also in the other cases. In spite of all the ingenuity that has been lately applied to prove the opposite assumption, the dependence of Mark upon Matthew and Luke will still always continue to be the last result of criticism. But as, besides them, Mark undoubtedly made use of other Gospel records also, or at least of one such, and as Luke likewise, as he himself tells us, had before him not merely one predecessor but several, it is still possible that each of them, in individual cases, may have preserved the original tradition in a purer form than the others; but the exact state of the case in this respect, can only be decided by internal evidence, and according to the circumstances of each account as it comes under discussion.

If, now, from this point, we refer to the opinions of Renan, we shall find that he agrees with the position above

enunciated, so far as to entertain the conviction that the fundamental source of the Gospel history is to be found in oral tradition, and that for a long time no such value was attributed to written memoranda, as that any hesitation would have been felt to supplement or modify them from tradition or from one another. Renan, moreover, finds the most ancient traces of Gospel records in the accounts which Papias gives of the collection of sayings of Matthew and of the memorabilia of Mark. He thinks that it was from these two sources that our two first Gospels were compiled, and that Matthew distinguishes himself by best preserving the utterances of Jesus in their original form, and that, on the contrary, Mark (who imposes upon Renan, just as he does on our German Eulogists of this Evangelist, especially by his—in our opinion completely and entirely affected—picturesqueness), adhered most closely in the narratives to the most ancient tradition emanating from Peter and other Eyewitnesses. Far less is the historical credibility of Luke: his Gospel is an exposition given at second, or more accurately at third, hand; a work of literary art, possessing indeed, comparatively speaking, the greatest charm, but to be used only with great caution by the critical historian. In Renan's remarks upon the literary character of this Gospel, there is much subtle and pertinent observation; but when he states it as his opinion that the author of it is accredited by the Acts of the Apostles as a companion of Paul, it would be much nearer the truth to say, that the Acts of the Apostles puts it beyond doubt that he wishes to *appear* as such, but *is* not; and when he turns the supposed companion of Paul into "an exalted Ebionite" and Jew, pious according to the law, we can scarcely believe our eyes when we see this maintained of the disciple of

Paul; but we see also at the same time, that the author has no notion of the peculiar tendency of the third Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles, and has always been and still is perfectly unacquainted with the investigations which have, in Germany, long since settled these questions, at least in the main points. But, to a still greater extent, is this the case with his conceptions of the fourth Gospel. There is no question in Gospel criticism so important for the right apprehension of Gospel History as this. But, with regard to this fundamental question, Renan's ideas are so hazy, that his answer to it from the stand-point of modern science, can only be described as a remarkable step in retrogression. Perfectly unacquainted, as it would appear, with the German criticism of the last twenty years, about John and its results, he grasps at an assumption which, in its self-contradictory lameness, has, among us, long since outlived itself. On the one hand, he cannot conceal from himself that Papias can have known nothing of a Gospel of John; and, as regards the contents of this Gospel, not only are "the abstract metaphysical lectures" of the Johannine Christ an unsurmountable offence to him, but he also discovers, that in particular points the narrator has, for a particular purpose, knowingly falsified history. Still, on the other hand, he thinks that not only later writers, like Tatian and Irenæus, but also even Justin knew and made use of our fourth Gospel (the exact opposite to this being the case as regards Justin); and while he certainly cannot look upon his speeches as historical, he is of opinion with regard to the narrative portions, that they are for the most part so accurate that the eyewitness cannot be mistaken, and that the course of the life of Jesus is, on the whole, more sharply and satisfactorily drawn in John than in the synoptics.

Thus he comes, in conclusion, to the result that the fourth Gospel was probably composed on the basis of the memoranda which John, in his old age, reduced to writing, by one of his disciples, and by the same hand enriched with those speech-portions which so little correspond either to the spirit or the language of the synoptic Christ. Still, he will not, characteristically enough, exclude the possibility that the Apostle himself, towards the end of his life, in his devotion to a theosophical mysticism, attributed the speeches to his Master. But, be this as it may; in any case, the Gospel in the majority of its historical narratives, is supposed to be as credible as it is in its accounts of the speeches of Jesus, unreliable. A similar partition of the Gospel was formerly attempted in Germany, soon after the first appearance of Strauss' *Life of Jesus*; but it met with such ill success, that it might have deterred any one from again taking it up; and it has become a sheer scientific impossibility since Baur triumphantly shewed that this Gospel, more than any other, is a work out of a single mould, that one and the same idea governs every particular in it as well as the whole, that its narratives are nothing but historical illustrations of its speeches, and that there is no alternative between adopting the whole as it stands as Johannine, and attributing that whole to another and far later writer. But Renan appears not only to know nothing of this fundamental investigation and of all further discussions connected with it, but his position generally towards the Johannine narratives is so uncritical, that even by all that Strauss, in his first *Life of Jesus*, has proved to demonstration to be unhistorical, he will not be disturbed in his faith in his hypothesis; and that features in the case of which the literary invention is so palpable as it is in that of the

unseamed coat of Christ, are actually forced by him to serve as a proof of the narrator having been an eye-witness.

The consequences here resulting to his representation of the history, will appear when we turn from the sources of the Evangelical history to the history itself.

In the discussion of the Evangelical history, either of two modes may be adopted. We may start from the individual narratives, as they lie before us, in order, by criticising them and by removing their unhistorical elements, to separate off the historical remainder; or, conversely we may begin with the exposition of the supposed historical course of events, as far as it can still be discovered, and show from this point how and on what grounds the manifold unhistorical accounts, as time went on, attached themselves to this historical kernel. It was the former process, which we may call an Analytical one, that Strauss had followed in his first *Life of Jesus*; on the present occasion he gives the preference to the second, the synthetical one. Of the two books into which, after the lengthy introduction, he divides the whole disquisition,—the first treats of the *Life of Jesus* in its historical outline,—the second of “the mythical history of Jesus in its origin and formation.” He has thus certainly renounced the advantage of founding his results upon that many-sided criticism of the Evangelical accounts, and their various explanations, which pursue the subject matter into its finest ramifications, in which the main strength of his earlier work consists. But he might feel the less reluctant to do this, as in that work he had already and so brilliantly satisfied this demand; and as he everywhere introduced into his new work as much of critical detail as was compatible with its more popular character.

And by limiting himself in this direction, he gains in another the power of doing now what he could not have done before ; and of, in part, sketching a connected map of the real history and historical personality of Jesus, in part of explaining far more perfectly and accurately than before the origin of the Evangelical history. Here the first of these investigations, the question as to the history and the character of Jesus is the main point, and the very question is brought especially before us by the parallel between Strauss and Renan ; for the latter has, on the whole, done but little for the explanation of what is unhistorical in the Evangelical narratives. But here also I shall be obliged to limit myself to the main point.

Now, if we enquire, in the first place, how Jesus became what he was, we shall be compelled to lament, that in his case as in that of so many of the greatest benefactors and heroes of humanity, the entire want of accredited accounts of his personal relations and history of his culture. Of the first we know little more than that he was born at Nazareth, that his father was called Joseph, his mother, Mary ; that the first followed the trade of a carpenter, which Jesus also probably learnt Himself and practised ; of the second we do not know even so much as this ; and, until the first appearance of Jesus in his intercourse with John the Baptist, nothing whatever. In order, therefore, to fill up this gap we are driven altogether to conjectures. Now, if we examine what direction these conjectures take in the case of each of our two critics, it is sufficiently characteristic, that in Renan the personal, in Strauss the historical relations occupy the foreground. The former does indeed begin with a short description of the state of the Jews in the centuries immediately preceding Christ, but attributes much more im-

portance to laying before his readers a picture of the immediate surroundings of Jesus and of the circumstances under which he grew up. He speaks of Nazareth and its charming neighbourhood, of the Jewish mode of instruction which, differing far from ours, made, even for the unlearned individual, a comparatively high mental cultivation possible; of the influence which the sacred Scriptures of the Jewish nation, especially those of a prophetic and poetical character, the proverbial sayings of a Hillel and of other Rabbis, the spirit of a superstitious supernaturalistic view of the world must have exercised upon a young man of that nation—a young man entirely unacquainted with Greek science, and who had always been without a notion of the political condition of the world; of the development of Messianic ideas and the ferment which had been thus produced in the minds of men; of the opposition existing between Galilee and Judea, not only in the character of the country, but also in that of their religious and social life. His disquisitions upon these points are moreover most attractive and well adapted to give us a more lively view of the circumstances under which Jesus grew up. But on a nearer view there is no mistaking that, even under this head, the imagination of the historian has introduced into his picture more than one feature, the historical character of which it is difficult to prove; that he gives to the enchanting nature of the country of Galilee, which, moreover, he himself was far from finding so rich and so pleasant as it is supposed to have been heretofore, an importance in the formation of the character of Jesus, utterly exaggerated and incapable of being proved by any definite signs; that considerable deductions must be made from his panegyric upon the cheerful innocence, the idyllic condition of the Gali-

lean population, when we remember that it was precisely this province that was the theatre of bloody insurrections against the Romans, the native country of Judas the Gaulonite, a centre of Jewish fanaticism and of politico-religious, guerilla warfare; that the journeys to the festivals at Jerusalem, which Jesus is said to have undertaken almost every year from His infancy upwards, and the effect which Renan ascribes to them did not, probably, take place exactly as they are told; for the narrative in Luke II., 41 has, not without reason, been called in question by Strauss, and on the occasion of His latest visit to Jerusalem, which is the only one that is indisputable, there is every appearance of the Temple and the life of the people in the city having been quite new to Him (Matt. xxi. 12, 24, 1 parall.) When Renan fully sums up the result of his meditations upon the religious development of Jesus, in the words: "Un Messie aux repas des noces, la courtisane et le bon Zachée appelés à ses festins, les fondateurs du royaume du ciel comme un cortège de paranymphe: voilà ce que la Galilée a osé, ce qu'elle a fait accepter," all this does indeed correspond with his inclination to make a Galilean idyll out of the beginnings of Christianity; but every one sees also all that is great, serious and world-revolutionising in the character of this religion, and its founder, is obscured by phrases which have the less value, as the image of the marriage feast of the Messiah, which also is the basis of the unhistorical narrative of the marriage feast at Cana in Galilee, is not even anything peculiarly Christian, and, as the Apocalypse proves, may consort perfectly well with the full glow of a spirit of vengeance perfectly Jewish.

Strauss affects to tell us far less of the history of Jesus' culture. He also assumes that he had not the benefit of

a learned education, even in the sense of the Judaism of that period ; and in support of this assumption he appeals to the freshness and originality of his doctrine and mode of teaching and to the absence of that scholastic spirit which is so remarkable even in the case of the highly gifted Apostle of the Gentiles. Moreover, he remarks that in Galilee, the population of which was thickly intermixed with Gentiles and separated by Samaria from the Jews, so proud of their faith, the circumstances were favourable to a more liberal religious tendency. But he does not venture to push the assumption further, supported as it is by no more definite historical traces, and therefore, is content to remark that Jesus (like Socrates we might add, who was also a mechanic and possessed no learned knowledge of the philosophy of which he was to be the reformer) found the means which he required for the development of inward powers with which he was endowed, in industrious study of the Old Testament and also in free religious intercourse with the learned men of his own nation, and in particular, with the adherents of the three dominant schools. To show this he gives us not only a survey far more comprehensive than Renan does of the course of development of Judaism, and in doing so comprises in his view in particular the assistance given in the prophets to a spiritualisation of the religion, the formation and modification of the Messianic idea, the Jewish sects of the last century before Christ ; but he also, following in the steps of Baur, completes this investigation by a description most luminous, and bringing out clearly and strikingly all essential points of the contributions made to the preparation for Christianity by the Grecian spirit, in virtue of its scientific and morally religious development, by the Roman empire and the practi-

cal sense of the Roman people. And to this discussion I cannot but attribute the greater value the more decidedly I continue to adhere to the conviction that not only the practical modification of the circumstances by the Roman empire, but also the course and spread of the intellectual culture of the Greeks, had a much greater share in the rise of the Christian religion than is generally assumed. But this is exactly what is most difficult of proof in the case of the founder of Christianity. It is, indeed, perfectly evident that from the time of the appearance of the most ancient Alexandrine Christians and Gnosticism, Hellenic philosophy and the entire circle of Hellenic thought had an appreciable influence upon the theological conceptions and the moral views of the Christians. In the case of Paul, also, whose native town of Tarsus was a famous seat of Greek and especially of Stoic philosophy, whom his Rabbinical studies might, at all events in the way of controversy, have brought into contact with foreign elements, whose teacher, Gamaliel, was reproached with his knowledge of the Greek language, who, from the time of his conversion, lived almost entirely in the Greek town of Antioch, in Ephesus, in Corinth, etc.,—in his case we should be less surprised if it could be shown that many of his ideas accrued to him, mediately or immediately, from the source upon which a Philo and others at that time drew so richly. But who will look upon it as a probable supposition that the same source was open also to the self-taught teacher of Nazareth, in whose case there is not a single reliable token that justifies the assumption that He was acquainted with the Greek language, or was in any way connected with persons of Greek cultivation? But if only the circumstances in question are clearly considered, we may be compelled to allow that

the notion is not so inadmissible as might at first sight appear. The question is, indeed, not whether Jesus himself came into immediate contact with Grecianism—this is extremely improbable—but whether many of the thoughts which Greek philosophy first set in motion might not have passed over into Palestine, and have become domesticated in the circles which imparted to the Founder of Christianity the basis of His culture, which He could not, any more than any other man, dispense with for the development of His creative idiosyncrasy. And this possibility cannot be at once negatived when we reflect that these thoughts had been for centuries operating continuously in the Grecian world, that they were everywhere met with disengaged from their scholastic form and their systematic connection among the orators and poets, as well as among the philosophers, in daily life, as well as in the schools and in literature; that, moreover, the Jewish people outside of Palestine, in Syria, in Asia Minor, and, above all, in Egypt, had likewise for centuries been in communication, most fruitful in results, with the Greek spirit, and that it was impossible that those of Palestine could blockade themselves against the ideas which their compatriots abroad had adopted, under the circumstances of the lively intercourse which they held with them, an intercourse kept up by commercial connections, and the national religious festivals; that the influence of the Greek character, which, under the Seleucidæ, and before the violent attempt at Hellenisation on the part of Antiochus Epiphanes, appears to have continued for a considerable time after a noiseless fashion, could hardly have been entirely set aside by the Maccabæan reaction, and that a speaking monument and most effective agent of this influence reached down for some years into the

Christian period in the sects of the Essenes and Therapeutæ. For that the decisive impulse to the rise of Essenism, which, according to Josephus, falls precisely into the time of the Maccabees, proceeded from Hellenism, and more particularly from the character of the Orphico-Pythagorean religion; this, notwithstanding all modern controversy, may be held to be a perfectly sure result, as the three parties of the Neo-Pythagoreans, the Essenes, and the Ebionites, do in the main, and, on the whole as well as in the most individual and accidental features, exhibit a connection which at once justifies us in characterising them as the Jewish and Christian branch of one and the same stock. Even, therefore, if we knew nothing whatever of the openings by which Greek influences could have had access to the circle of growing Christianity, still our ignorance would be far from being any ground for denying such a connection altogether; since, on the contrary, the general circumstances of that period were altogether adapted to favour it; and since, on the other hand, we have before us the fact that ideas which were emphatically enunciated in the ante-Christian period, but to which self-involved Judaism never attained, found in Christianity their most fruitful application—all this being so, we could scarcely avoid maintaining such a connection. But there is even more to be said in favour of it. However little we may know with accuracy of the then spiritual condition of Palestine, and in particular of Galilee, still we see that the Galilee of the Gentiles, with its mixed population, with its half-Grecian towns of Cæsarea and Ptolemais on the neighbouring coasts, with Greeks and inhabitants of Greek education in its principal city, was open to foreign influences in a high degree; and in the Essenes we recognise a party which, having been

from its outset connected with Grecianism, was eminently adapted to obtain a hearing among its Jewish countrymen for ideas which it adopted out of it. It is especially this last point to which I would attribute no small importance. Jesus himself, indeed, was certainly not a member of the society of the Essenes; and what the pragmatism of the period of enlightenment pretended to tell of the co-operation of His brother members towards His beatific plan, has been, and justly, long since forgotten. The open cheerfulness of His character stands in too decided an opposition to the recluse reserve, and the ascetic severity of the Essenes—His lofty, spiritual freedom to their party narrowness and pedantic secrecy; and, on the other hand, the Messianic idea, from which He starts at the outset, appears to have had but little importance for them. But it was quite as little necessary in the fourteenth century to be a Begarde,* or in the seventeenth a Quaker, in order to come into contact with these sects, as it was in the first, to be a member of the order of the Essenes, in order to feel the influence of the leading ideas and religious peculiarity of this order. We may assume with certainty that the Essenes were a society, the influence of which extended far beyond the narrow circle of its regular members, and could not but reach everyone who in the Palestine of that time was seriously interested in religious matters.

Of what extraordinary importance, then, was the one fact that men here saw before them a society eminent for piety which despised the traditionary sacrificial service, and, on its account, the whole service of the Temple; which instead of sacrifices required purity of heart, and overcame the national obstinacy of Judaism by the most extensive charity to men! How closely connected this

* One of a sect of Franciscans.

moral tendency was with Christianity we see at once by the extent to which, and the rapidity with which, it penetrated into the most ancient Christian community; and that even the founder of Christianity was touched by it, is shown not only by the whole spirit of his doctrine, but especially by what we shall immediately speak of, his position, that is, towards the Jewish worship, and his sayings about oath-taking and marriage, which have an unmistakeably Essene sound.

Connected with the question just discussed, is the investigation into the relation in which Jesus stood to John the Baptist. Now it is unquestionable that the Evangelical accounts upon this point are for the most part unhistorical, and contain assertions that have arisen merely from dogmatic presumption; still our two critics are right in assuming that these accounts are founded upon so much of fact as that John was visited by Jesus and imparted to Him his baptism. But Renan adds that this did not take place until Jesus had come forward independently as a teacher, and had collected a small school around Him. In saying this he has allowed himself to be misled by some of those unhistorical features, and in particular by the fourth Gospel, whose representation upon this very point is most unmistakeably shaped by the purpose of elevating the higher nature and dignity of Jesus by the surprising recognition and voluntary self-subordination of the Baptist, to which appears to be added an incorrect explanation of the words in John iii. 22. But what for us would be the main point to learn, namely, something about the influence which John exercised upon Jesus; upon this point we have to lament that the Evangelical accounts, which by their view of the whole case are altogether prevented from conceiving the existence of such an influence,

give us no solution whatever ; and Strauss, therefore, limits himself, in reference to it, to a few general surmises. He looks upon it as probable that Jesus not merely made a transitory use of His intercourse with so important a personage, that together with the move in the direction of morals which proceeded from him, He also learnt much as regarded His calling to be a teacher of the people, but that in doing so He became at the same time continually more and more conscious of the distinction between His own method and that of the Baptist. For His preaching of the kingdom of God, if He stood in the relation of a disciple to John, He must have received from him a most important impulse ; His connection also with Essenism, which we have supposed above, might have been brought about by the prophet whose baptism bears a strong resemblance to the Essenic lustrations, and who, like the Essenes, subordinated the privileges of the sons of Abraham to moral performances ; and if, in Matthew, they are Pharisees and Sadducees whom the Baptist calls a "generation of vipers," this appellation of the dominant sects would fit in most suitably with the acrimony of the anti-pharisaic speeches of Jesus. The assumption of Renan, on the other hand, that Jesus adopted the rite of baptism from John, can only adduce in support of itself the questionable testimony of the fourth Gospel ; unquestionably that of Strauss is the more correct when he expresses it as his belief, founded upon the representation of the synoptics and John's own half confession, that it was not until after the death of the founder that the Christian community adopted the baptismal usage, and then referred it, as they did so much beside of a later origin, to the ordinance of that founder, not, however, put into His mouth until after His resurrection. Everything, however, is here so uncertain

that the greater or less probability of particular suppositions is a question which cannot be settled; and though the assumption that John as a predecessor of Jesus, exercised an important influence upon the development of His convictions certainly recommends itself in many points of view, still, on the other hand, the possibility is not to be denied that Jesus came only into temporary contact with the Baptist, and not until He had already secured His own standing-point.

But in whatever way the founder of our religion may have become what He was, it is for us a far more important question WHAT he was; what sort of a personality it was from which proceeded this world-wide effect; in what consisted all the novelty and peculiarity which he introduced into the faith and life of mankind. And, fortunately, we are upon this point far more fully informed than upon the cause and more detailed circumstances of His inner development. For certain as it may be that the longer speeches, especially as Matthew gives them, are to be looked upon as literary compositions, it is unmistakeable that there are interwoven into them those pithy sayings and parables which even oral tradition might have preserved for a considerable period in an essentially accurate form; and however much posterity, in accordance with its dogmatic conceptions and requirements may have added to their genuine basis, or have modified that basis, still the most important and characteristic, and these especially, bear so unmistakeable a stamp of fresh and vivid originality, they go so far above everything that we find elsewhere in the Judaism of the time and that could have been put into the mouth of Jesus from the Jewish and Jewish-Christian conception of the Messiah, they point so uniformly to one and the same central point of a new view of the world and a personality unique of its kind,

that while we may indeed be doubtful of many individual points, we are sure of the collective figure resulting from all these individual features by their unsought-for coincidence in the main.

Now if we attempt to sketch, first of all, the outline of this figure, to get, independent first of all of His more immediate national and theoretic commission, a view of the religious consciousness of Jesus, we are immediately struck by a feature of fundamental importance—that peculiar inward relation into which Jesus places Himself towards God, and which He expresses by the constant description of God as His Father. With this, therefore, each of the two writers has started in his discussion of the life of Jesus. The peculiar source of His strength, says Renan (p. 73), was an exalted idea of the Divinity which He did not owe to Judaism, but which appears to have been altogether a creation of His own great soul. He feels God within Himself, He bears Him within Himself; He preaches, therefore, not a doctrine, but He preaches Himself; and He preaches at the same time God as the Father of all men, and the kingdom of God, by which, Renan thinks, He understood originally not an external Messianic kingdom, but the reign of true piety, and with which is connected the morality which is especially proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount. This morality did not indeed, as Renan says, set up really new principles, but the purest of these already set up acquired, in virtue of the person who preached them, by the amiable character of the new Rabbi, His charming appearance, His enchanting form, a “poesy” which gave them a penetrative force entirely new. The latter notion is indeed strange enough; if Jesus had really nothing new to say to his generation, no personal charms would have availed to invest Him with the importance He possessed. To say

nothing of the fact that Renan's conjectures as to His external appearance, which remind one more of a hero of romance, are altogether arbitrary and entirely unnecessary to explain His subsequent success. Socrates, at least, who in his own time exercised a similar power of attraction over men, was distinguished among his countrymen by exactly the opposite, namely, his ugliness. But Renan's remark as to the fundamental religious view of Jesus, does undoubtedly hit the central point of our question. This has been more accurately investigated by Strauss. Starting from the moral doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount, he shows how this itself, in its religious precepts (Matt. v. 45), suffices for becoming a Son of God, who maketh His sun to rise upon the evil and the good; and he at once recognises in this a fundamental feature of the piety of Jesus: "He felt and conceived of the Heavenly Father as the impartial Goodness," and on this very account Jesus preferred, above all, to designate Him by the name of "Father." But when He made this view, which the New Testament scarcely touches on in a single isolated passage, the fundamental view of the relation of God to man—"this could only originate in Himself, it could only be the consequence of that impartial goodness being the fundamental tendency of His own character, and of His being, in this, conscious of His agreement with God." "He conceived of God, in a moral point of view, as being identical in character with Himself in the most exalted moments of His religious life, and strengthened in turn His own religious life by this ideal. But the most exalted religious tendency in His own consciousness was exactly that comprehensive love, overpowering the evil only by the good, and which He therefore transferred to God as the fundamental tendency

of His nature." How from this there proceeded, on the one hand, the call to be perfect even as God is perfect, the call to that perfect righteousness with which Jesus met the externality of the Mosaic law; on the other hand, the principle of the most comprehensive charity towards all men, unlimited and unreserved, the recognition of the equality of all men before God, and of equal duty towards all men—how for Jesus Himself there arose from this universal charity towards man and from the feeling of a union with the Godhead, an inward cheerfulness exalting Him above all external deprivations, anxieties, and wishes—all this I will only briefly point out in this place: the proofs are at hand for every one in sayings, the authenticity of which cannot be called in question. But if we ask how this harmonious disposition arose in Him, Strauss (vol. i., p. 282) remarks, and most truly, that it cannot be assumed that it was preceded by severe internal struggles; for that in all natures which were not enlightened until they had gone through violent conflict and rupture, as was the case with Paul, Augustin, and Luther, the marks of this continued for ever, and there clung to them for life something harsh, acrid and gloomy, of which not a trace is found in Jesus. He appears from the first a beautiful and graceful nature, which had only to develop itself out of itself, to become continually more and more clearly conscious of itself, more and more firmly established in itself, but not to turn round and begin a new life. It is self-evident in His case that, in being what He was, He had no idea of excluding individual errors and weaknesses, the necessity for continuous moral labour, and of accepting the dogma, as such, of the sinlessness of Christ; and with reference to this point he says, with good reason on the occasion of the baptism by John, that even the

best and purest of men may ever accuse himself of many errors, of much neglect and much precipitation, and that it is in exact proportion with the completeness of its perfection that the soul is sensitive of the slightest impurity of the moral impulses, of the slightest deviation from the moral ideal. And if, besides universal experience and the conclusion resting upon the conditions of our own moral development, a special historical proof is required, Strauss refers us in part to the baptism at the Jordan, which was certainly an act of expiation, in part to the expression of Jesus in which he disclaims the epithet of "good," because it only belongs to God; and in the same sense he might have reminded us of the prayers "Forgive us our sins," and "Lead us not into temptation," which no one, it appears to me, who feels himself unconditionally elevated above human weakness, in a moral point of view, could either utter in his own name, or even dictate to others, with that entire personal sympathy which is to be supposed in the case of one who offers a prayer.

It is easy to see that the stand-point of the religious life, which we are historically justified in ascribing to Jesus, was in profound and fundamental opposition not only to the then prevailing Rabbinico-Pharisaic acceptance of Mosaism, but also to the original tendency of it. It is a different question how clearly Jesus himself was conscious of this opposition, and how definitely He expresses Himself on the subject. As to this point our Gospels, even independent of the fourth, contain different accounts, and these, to a certain extent, irreconcilable. The relation between them and the credibility of each respectively is examined by Strauss, with his accustomed circumspection (vol. i., p. 283), and the result at which he arrives is that Jesus had a far clearer insight into the novelty of His

principle, and the incompatibility between it and the old Jewish character, than was attained by any one of His personal disciples. In proof of this he appeals to the relation in which Jesus stood to the holiday of the Sabbath, to fasting, and to the law of divorce; he appeals to the expulsion of dealers out of the temple, including, as it does, an attack upon the whole sacrificial system, and in which we may recognise a feeling of displeasure at the externality of this mode of worshipping God. He appeals to the saying about the destruction of the Temple, which he rightly supposes that Jesus really uttered in order to point to the future abolition of the Temple worship. But if Matthew v., 18, 19, is brought forward in opposition to this view, he shows convincingly that these two verses, which absolutely interrupt the connection of the thoughts, must be a later interpolation either into the text of Matthew, or at all events into the original tradition of the speech of Jesus. But the most decisive proof will always rest upon the explanations given in the Sermon on the Mount, which, in their magnificent boldness and their moral ideality, cannot possibly be looked upon as a product of later dogmatism, either that of the Jewish Christian, whose law-service they far outstrip, or the Pauline, whose peculiar thoughts and watch-words do not appear in them, but throughout only as the especial creation of Jesus. "It was said to them of old, but *I* say to you." In these words Jesus appears as a new lawgiver in opposition to Moses; and in treating of the Law of Moses as an imperfect thing, which on account of the stiff-neckedness of the nation, had remained standing on a lower ground, in applying in His new law the outward command to the inner heart, in requiring, instead of the legal act, the innocent disposition, and the corresponding

conduct—perfect righteousness, He declares the distinct consciousness of the necessity of an advance from the law of the Mosaic religion to one more pure and spiritual. In doing this He might still be convinced that He was abiding by that law in its true meaning ; but when He placed that meaning exclusively in the moral requirement, in the command to love God and one's neighbour, He declared indirectly that the whole ritual law was a thing of no importance, and established a principle which, in its logical development, must of itself have led to a rupture with Mosaism, even had He himself given no more definite indications in this direction. And that this was the case is shown by the further development of Christianity ; for as it cannot be doubted that Paul was the first to declare faith in Christ and the observance of the Mosaic law to be incompatible things, preached the abolition of the law, the foundation of a new religion fundamentally opposed both to Judaism and heathenism, he must have discovered in the faith which he found already existing in the Christian community, something which made it appear to him irreconcilable with the continued validity of the law ; and thus only can be explained, on the one hand his passionate zeal for the eradication of the new doctrine, and on the other the antinomistic form which this doctrine immediately took in his own mind after his conversion. He held fast by his conviction of the impossibility of combining the Christian faith with the Jewish, but with a turn that showed the greatest genius and originality. He now saw in that which had been to him the greatest offence in Christianity, its most pre-eminent excellence, and the main object of Christ's appearance to consist in putting an end to the law, and replacing the Jewish religion by a new and more perfect one. And we read

even that Stephen, the persecuted of Paul, declared that Jesus, at His second coming, will abrogate the Temple-service, and give a new law in place of the Mosaic; and when the Acts of the Apostles represents this statement as false evidence, it immediately after puts into the mouth of Stephen a speech culminating in the proposition that Solomon, indeed, built a house for God, but that He does not dwell in houses built by hands. But if Stephen declared such views, and Paul found them in existence, the most probable conclusion is that the occasion of them was given in Jesus' own declarations, and not merely indirectly in the spirit of His doctrine.

With this relation of freedom towards Mosaism in Jesus may have been connected an attempt or an intention to give admission "to the kingdom of God" to non-Israelites without any preliminary adoption into communion with the Jewish people or religion. To what extent this was the case is difficult to decide; for the reason that not merely the different Gospels, but also different passages of one and the same Gospel, are far from agreeing in their statements on this point. Luke (ix. 52, ff.; x. 30, ff.; xvii. 11, ff.) and John (iv. 4, ff.; x. 10, 16; xii. 20, f.) represent Jesus as not only meeting with a fertile field of operations in Samaria, and an aptitude among Samaritans which inspires Him with words of recognition towards this mixed nation so odious to the Jews, but they represent Him also as unequivocally prefiguring the subsequent mission to the heathen, and prophesying the foundation of a Church which shall unite Jews and Gentiles in a spiritual worship of God, disengaged from the Jewish cult. In Matthew, on the other hand (xix. 1; xv. 21, ff. x. 5, f.; and similarly in Mark (x. 1; vii. 25), in going to Jerusalem He avoids

the nearer road through Samaria ; He forbids the Apostles, when He sends them out, to turn to heathens or Samaritans ; He warns them, in the same sense as it appears, not to throw what is holy before dogs and swine ; He compares the heathen to dogs, to which is not to be given the bread which belongs to the children, the Israelites ; and refuses at first to heal the daughter of the heathen woman, because He is only sent to the Jews. But the same Matthew (viii. 5, ff.) also agrees with Luke (vii. 1, ff.) in speaking of His readiness to fulfil the desire of the heathen captain in Capernaum, and on this occasion he attributes to Him an expression (in Luke xiii. 28, f.) in which He declares with severity that the faithful shall, in the kingdom of God, take the place of the unbelieving Jews. He makes Him repeat the same threat xxi. 43 (where the others omit it). He speaks of His having uttered before His death the prophecy that the Gospel shall be preached to all nations (xxiv. 14) ; and after His resurrection (xxviii. 19, with Luke, xxiv. 47 ; Mark xvi. 15) the commission to His disciples to devote themselves to the problem.

It is impossible to reconcile these different accounts ; but if it is asked which of them deserves most credit it cannot indeed be mistaken that, in the case of one part of those of a Catholic tendency, and in particular of the whole representation of John, and in the main also, of that of Luke, the views and relations of a later period are reflected in them ; it would, nevertheless, be an over-hasty assumption to maintain that this is the case with all without exception, and that among the various component parts of the Evangelical tradition, and in particular among those of Matthew, the Catholic must necessarily be later and less historical than the special. On the contrary, if

we take into consideration the circumstances under which the Evangelical tradition was formed, we may certainly assume that, during the conflict between Jewish exclusiveness and Pauline Catholicity which occupied the generations immediately succeeding Jesus, not merely one side, but the other as well, endeavoured to fortify itself by the words and the example of Christ, and dealt with the Evangelical history in this sense; and if we call in other analogies to our assistance we shall likewise be compelled to say, that as Luther was a more liberal spirit than the Lutheran divines of the succeeding generation, and Socrates a more profound thinker than Xenophon or Antisthenes, so also Jesus must be unconditionally credited with having raised Himself far higher above the narrow prejudices of His nation than those of His disciples, who could scarcely understand the spread of Christianity among the heathen when it had become an accomplished fact. If, therefore, we cannot doubt that He was far from educating out of the religious principle which He introduced into the world, a Catholic result so decidedly and thoroughly as Paul did; still, on the other hand, He was not so far removed from it as that He might not, under certain circumstances, have considered those who were not Jews deserving of his intercourse and teaching; and thus, in conclusion, Strauss may be near the truth in conjecturing that Jesus did, in the first instance, refer His calling only to His own people, but that as time went on, and His communication with Samaritans and heathen increased, and His experience of aptitude in them, and of obstinacy in the Jews increased, He included them more and more in His plan, and raised Himself at last to the idea that they might afford appreciable support to the society founded by Him, but made no immediate preparation for this, leaving all beyond to time.

Still more important than the question just discussed is that as to the relation in which Jesus stood to the idea which constituted, at that time, the nucleus of the religious and political hopes of His nation, and which was destined through Him to attain to such a world-wide importance, so profound a modification—the idea of the Messiah. The answer, indeed, to this question would be, according to the ordinary conception, extremely simple. At the beginning of His public appearance He announced Himself as the Saviour promised by the prophets ; but He had, at the same time, removed from the expectation of the Messiah cherished by His people all political elements, all national limitation, and understood accordingly by the Messiah the spiritual Saviour of the whole of mankind. But the historical correctness of this assumption is not so firmly established as that a more accurate investigation, both in respect of the moment at which Jesus declared Himself to be the Messiah, and of the conceptions which He connected with this title, might not give different results. As regards, in the first place, the moment of His appearance as the Messiah, all our Evangelists do indeed assume it as self-evident that from the first He was perfectly conscious of His Messianic dignity. And this, after all which they tell of His birth, His baptism in the Jordan, and His temptation, could not be otherwise. And they represent Him as announcing this consciousness, not only practically by His miraculous operation, in which He plenipotentiarily gives commands to sicknesses and demons, but on occasion as expressly declaring it in words (*e.g.* Matt. ix. 15 ; x. 23 ; xi. 2, ff. parall.). But, at the same time, the same informants tell us that at a later period of His public ministry He recognised a special revelation of God, in the fact that Peter declared Him to

be the Messiah ; they represent Him, on His first appearance, as preaching the nearness of the kingdom of God, but not as announcing Himself as its founder ; and of the ordinary descriptions of the Messiah, "Son of David," and "Son of God," they never represent Him as having used the first, nay, in one place, (Matt. xxii. 41, ff. parall.) as pretty clearly disavowing it as inapplicable, and as only accepting the second, when offered to Him by others ; while He himself chiefly prefers to call Himself the Son of Man, which, according to Matthew, cannot then have been a recognised title of the Messiah. Now as it cannot be assumed that these features were not discovered until a later period, which, from its own stand-point had every motive for the opposite representation, it is concluded, and rightly so, that Jesus did not, at the beginning of His career as a teacher, put forward the pretension that the Messianic expectation was fulfilled in His own person, but only subsequently, and after this faith had formed itself among His adherents, impart to it His own confirmation. And as, moreover, the notion that He had long had this conviction in His own mind without declaring it, is irreconcilable with the magnificent sincerity and careless bravery of His character, there follows the further supposition that it arose within Him in the course of His public ministry, and not before ; but that at the first He, like the Baptist, only proclaimed the nearness of the new Messianic period, and laboured to produce the inward condition of its coming—the conversion, that is, of His nation to true piety. And then the higher on the one hand the opinion and expectation of His adherents rose as to their Master's calling, and on the other, the more completely experience taught Him that that true piety, of which the ideal lived within Him, was only to be found

within Himself, and that it was only from Him that it could spread to others—that He alone truly knew the Father—the more vivid the consciousness gradually became within Him that it was Himself and none other whom God had destined to open the new epoch of the world to found the kingdom of God. And this consideration is confirmed by a still further one, brought forward by Strauss, and which, as it appears to me, penetrates into the inmost core of the whole question. It could not have been, he remarks, (vol. i. p. 268 f., 311 f.), appropriating a striking expression of Schleiermacher's—it could not have been from the Messianic prophecies that the peculiar self-consciousness of Jesus developed itself, nor generally from the conviction that He was the Messiah, but conversely, it must have been from His own self-consciousness that He came to the conclusion that in the Messianic prophecies no one else could be meant but Himself. For if, at a period antecedent to the completion of His peculiar religious consciousness, He had hit upon the idea that He was the Messiah, and if that Messianic idea upon which His religious consciousness developed itself had been the national one, it could only have taken the form which that idea had already taken among His own contemporaries, and would have obtained such complete mastery over Him that He could hardly have divested Himself of it again. If, on the contrary, we find it overmastered in His life and conduct, it is probable that He did not meddle with it until, by means of the strengthening of a peculiar religious consciousness of His own, He could adopt it simultaneously. But if this was so, it is obvious to suppose that not merely passing thoughts about Himself and His contemporaries, but above all, His experiences of His public ministry itself, and the knowledge thereby

gained of His spiritual superiority and originality, were causes which brought to maturity in Him the conviction that He was the Saviour, long since announced, of His people.

If, then, the Messianic consciousness in Jesus only *gradually* developed itself out of His own religious consciousness, and His relation to the surrounding world, the change which He produced in the prevalent expectation of the Messiah becomes all the more intelligible. The political elements in the idea of the Messiah, the demand for a new and powerful Jewish polity, was completely set aside by Him, whether because everything that looked in the direction of violence, independence, and worldly dominion, was opposed to the devout, mild, and ideal constitution of His mind, or because He had recognised the impossibility of carrying out any political plan of deliverance, accepted the oppression of foreign spoilers as an inevitable destiny of Heaven, and expected the introduction of a new state of things solely from Divine omnipotence, and found the immediate problem that was to be dealt with, and His own peculiar calling to consist only in bringing about a second birth of His nation of a morally religious character, and thus producing the indispensable inward condition of success. It will not be objected that the last assumption attributes to Him too much calculation, provided only we do not, as Renan does, consider Him a perfect child as regards knowledge and judgment of the universally known condition of the world, and even remember the expression, "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," whereby he most clearly refers to the perversity of men's resisting a power to which they are already *de facto* subject. But in the same degree in which the political side of the Messianic idea disappeared

as regarded His own conception of His calling, the importance of His ministry as a teacher must have increased ; from this, even in His own view, must His faith in His higher destiny have proceeded : He is not the king who externally produces a new order of things, but the prophet who preaches it, and the teacher who prepares men inwardly for it. The success of this preparatory ministry must have been the necessary condition of the real entrance of that order of things, which entrance, indeed, could scarcely be brought about except by a miraculous interference of the Godhead. But when, in the course of His ministry, experience impressed upon Him more and more that it was only among a small minority of His countrymen that He could count upon aptitude for the reception of His doctrine, and among a still smaller upon a continuous adherence to it ; and on the other hand, among the existing and political powers, in the school-theology, and the powerful party of the Pharisees, He could only look for an obstinate resistance ; then He could not conceal from Himself the possibility that He might Himself fall a victim to this opposition ; and this thought must have struck its roots into His mind deeper in proportion to the growth of that opposition, and the more definitely when He consulted the sacred Scriptures of His nation as to His destiny and His views, a number of passages admitting of a Messianic interpretation, impressed upon Him the conviction that the Divine Messenger was fated to pass along His road through sorrows and a violent death. When, therefore, our Evangelists unanimously assure us that He prophesied His own tragic destiny, and when they represent Him as beginning with these prophecies at the same moment at which He had given corroboration to the recognition of His Messianic

dignity (Matt. xvi. 21 parall.), there is in general every probability in favour of this. Only these predictions cannot have been so definite as we have them in our accounts. He cannot have been unequivocally convinced from the first that this was His fixed destiny, as, according to our Evangelists' own statement, He was not firmly so convinced even immediately before His arrest (Matt. xxvi. 39); neither does His whole conduct in Jerusalem, nor the scene of His entrance, convey the impression of one who knew that His fate was inevitably sealed, but rather of one who has challenged the enemy in the centre of His power to a serious, but not hopeless, conflict. Had He been certainly convinced that the journey to Jerusalem could only end in His own destruction, then, instead of the wise man fearlessly and with calm resignation to God fulfilling His appointed calling, in which character He generally appears to us, He must have been a passionately excited enthusiast thus to bring about His own destruction; and doubly so if He had done this with the further conviction, which humanly He could not have, that He would rise again on the third day after His death. On the contrary, far the most probable supposition is that He entered upon the journey to Jerusalem with serious forebodings indeed, and with a mind prepared for the worst; but that, even at that time, He did not despair of the possibility of acting upon His countrymen by a last decisive attempt in the capital, at the feast at which the whole nation was assembled from far and wide, and even His own Galilean adherents were not absent, and attracting the former to Him in a mass. After His arrival in Jerusalem this expectation might have become fainter and fainter, and the conjecture that He would fall a victim to His enemies might have become a certainty. He stood

now in a position from which retreat was neither right nor possible, where the question was between death or victory; and we cannot doubt that He chose the first when He saw that the second was not appointed for Him; nay, that He chose it with a pious confidence that it was precisely by His death that His cause would conquer. Now, therefore, He might speak with greater certainty of His inevitable fate, but scarcely of the mode of it, on which He could not calculate; but that He did so previously with the same certainty, and undertook the journey to Jerusalem with the fixed consciousness, that it not only *may*, but *must*, lead to His death—this cannot be assumed.

But, however early or however late, however definitely or indefinitely, the surmise arose within Him that He would perish in the fulfilment of His calling, it is impossible that He should have adopted it without considering how far it was compatible with His Messianic commission and dignity. To this the immediate answer might have been, that the death of the Messiah was produced by the unbelief of His countrymen and contemporaries, and was necessary for the extinction of this unbelief; or, if the answer were sought in the Old Testament, and given in accordance with the religious views of Judaism, then, that the Messiah was to die (as is said in Isaiah liii. 10 of “the Servant of God,” though properly of the Jewish people), as a sin-offering for others. And it is perfectly credible that Jesus looked at the fate which threatened Him from this point of view, and that our authorities are in the main correct, when on the occasion of the last Passover, and elsewhere, they put into His mouth expressions of this kind. But still the difficulty was not thus removed. The Messiah must not merely have enjoyed Divine protection

for His person, which excluded the assumption of His yielding to His enemies, being given over to the death threatened by them, but, with this Person, the entrance of the "kingdom of heaven" was connected. It was impossible that even Jesus, in spite of the greater purity of His Messianic idea, could let this demand upon Him drop; He might, indeed, so far modify this idea as to abandon the notion of a political dominion of the Son of God, and of an application of human force for the foundation of it; but, so long as He did not entirely give it up, He could not abdicate personal participation in the institution of that kingdom: He could not, therefore, even look upon Himself as the Messiah, without expecting that, in the actual entrance of the new state of things which He had at all events prepared, a prominent share would be destined for Him. But how could this be combined with the probability that He would be the victim of the hatred of His enemies before the actual solution of His problem? There was but one means for the fulfilment of His purpose: the assumption that He would not, in this case, continue in death Himself, but would, at the latest, at the time when God should, in a miraculous manner, introduce the new order of things, be again awakened by the Divine omnipotence for the completion of His work. This expectation must therefore have been cherished by Jesus, in the later period of His life at least, as the hope of an immediate victory of His cause declined, and He must naturally have announced it in one form or another. It does not indeed by any means follow that He really said all that the Evangelical accounts put into His mouth about His coming again in the clouds, attended by angels, about the judgment and all connected with it, about the nearness and the miraculous prognostics of this second

Advent: it is, on the contrary, perfectly clear that far the greater part of what is found in these speeches is taken partly out of the history and the expectations of a later period, partly from the *eschatology** then current among the Jews; and Renan proceeds in anything but a critical manner when (p. 270) he attributes to Jesus himself the whole of the eschatologic speeches in the Gospels, with all their materialism and fantastic imagery, their harshnesses, and their contradictions. But the basis of them, at least the position that in case He should perish before accomplishing His work He would be restored to life by God for the completion of it—this position we must attribute to Himself. But, as preceding death is a condition of coming again, He cannot have predicted the latter more definitely than the former, and if He was not, until His last days, unconditionally convinced that He was doomed to die, neither can He have been unconditionally convinced of His coming again, but His faith can only have been that, even in case of His death being certain, this would not be the final end either of Him or His work; He can only have predicted His return hypothetically, and, therefore, only in an indefinite manner, and without any pretence of fixing the time or describing the mode of it in detail.

Even upon this view, however, this expectation may appear, according to modern ideas, to be startling enough to give rise to the question whether we are not attributing to the founder of our religion a fanaticism irreconcilable with the rest of his character. This demur prevented even Strauss from expressing himself as decidedly with regard to the belief of Jesus in His Second Coming as, in my

* Theory about the end of all things.

opinion, he should have done. In the first place this belief followed so naturally from the contemplation of the then situation of affairs, that it was difficult for him to avoid it. After He had once taken into His consideration the possibility and probability of His violent death, He had, upon His own point of view, no other mode of combining this result with the continued conviction of His Messianic calling. Then, for Jesus and His disciples, there lies behind this view, so foreign to our notions, that world-conquering idealism, that faith, firm as a rock, in the future of His work, without which this work itself would hardly have been carried out in the world. It is, as Renan remarks p. 281, perfectly true that the Apocalyptic expectation alone, without the pure system of morality, the inward apprehension of the religion, the spiritual freedom of the new faith, would indeed never have led to the world-wide influence of Christianity, but that it was exactly this prospect of the future which, taken in itself, must have crushed all its efficiency for the present world, that lent to Christianity the elastic power it required to master the world; and then, as regards the founder of it, we need not be so very much surprised to see Him involved in a belief which, everything considered, was as natural for Him, as to us, on our stand-point, it cannot but be strange. Lastly, we should not forget that much which appears to us in the highest degree natural might appear to others as surprising as the expectation of the Second Coming does to us. That a sane man, with high spiritual gifts, should have expected to return to earth in a miraculous manner after his death—this we find incredible; but that each one of us will continue after death to live in another world—this we consider perfectly intelligible. But the one is not further removed from ordinary

experience than the other; and the Jews of the time of Jesus, unless they had passed through the schools of Greek philosophy, were so little capable of reconciling themselves to the notion of the continuous life of the disembodied soul, that for them as well as for Paul (1 Cor. xv. 32), all the consolation arising from the faith in immortality, was connected with the faith in the resurrection.

If Jesus believed in His own Second Coming, this was only a special application, depending upon His Messianic consciousness, of a faith which He shared with the whole of His generation; it therefore assumes nothing more than this, that the resurrection, for which every pious Israelite hoped, would be accomplished first in Him, and in connection with it the accomplishment of His Messianic work come in.

There might be more doubt about another point, which in the ordinary conception of Jesus and the accounts about Him certainly occupies a considerable space—His miracles. Not that the question is whether He performed miracles, for that this is inconceivable is beyond all doubt; and the recognition of this impossibility is the first condition for every historical discussion of the Evangelical history; but the difficulty simply is to determine whether He intended to perform miracles, and believed that He performed miracles. On the one hand there cannot be the slightest doubt that He shared in the general belief in miracles of His contemporaries and countrymen, *i.e.*, that He had quite as little notion as they of the laws of nature and their inviolability, and, therefore, neither doubted the ancient narratives of the miracles of Moses and the prophets, nor considered as impossible a repetition of them in His own time. On the other hand, it by no means follows from such a general belief in the possibility of

miracles that He must have believed that He performed miracles Himself, or saw them performed; nor did even His conviction of His Messianic calling necessarily imply this belief. He might live in the hope that God at the proper time would found His kingdom after a miraculous manner, without believing Himself called upon to perform miracles, or capable of doing so. Even Mahomet, among a people as superstitious as the Jews, disclaimed in the most decisive manner, in his own person, the character of a performer of miracles. The real state of the case, as regards Jesus in this respect, can only be gathered from our Gospels. This only in a general way, still only from them. But however decisive the declarations may be which they attribute to Him, little is thus gained for us. When they represent Him as performing a number of miracles which mock at every natural explanation, they must indeed also represent Him as believing in His miraculous powers and speaking of them. But still, their statement taken by itself does not warrant us in considering those speeches as more historical than the deeds; but that they are so must first be proved independently. It is otherwise in the case of those expressions which contradict the Evangelists' own superstitious assumptions; if such expressions meet us from the lips of Jesus it cannot be assumed that they were attributed to Him by the Evangelists or by the Christian legend, which was as eager for miracles as they were; they have, therefore, a decided presumption in favour of their genuineness. Now such an expression is found in the answer to the demand for a sign made by the Pharisees, when Jesus declares to the "evil and adulterous generation" that no sign shall be given to them; and when, according to the credible statement of Matthew and Luke, he adds, "no sign except that

of Jonah," Strauss (vol. i. p. 362) is certainly right in maintaining that these words did not originally refer to the resurrection as Matthew interprets them, but that, on the contrary, by the sign of Jonah, according to the whole of the context, only his preaching could be meant, and that, accordingly, in these words Jesus expressly disclaims any other proof of His exalted mission. This would not, certainly, exclude the possibility of a belief of a miraculous power being granted to Him having forced itself upon Him in the sequel. "However He might continue to disclaim material performance of miracles," correctly remarks Strauss, "still in the belief of His countrymen and contemporaries He was bound to perform miracles whether He would or not." From the time that He was considered a prophet, miraculous powers were attributed to Him, and from the time they were attributed they were, as a matter of course, put into operation. Under the circumstances, and among the men under which and among whom Jesus appeared, it was impossible that He could be considered a prophet, nay, even the greatest of the prophets, without being immediately considered a performer of miracles; and when he was once so considered, it is again inconceivable that reports of the miracles, which he was supposed to have performed, should not have been immediately circulated, and that also individual results should not have really occurred which left the impression of the miraculous upon His contemporaries and even upon Himself. But the province of these results could not extend further than the influence extended which the faith, or in other words, the feelings and the imagination do, according to natural laws, exercise upon the bodily life of man.

It may therefore have been the case, as Strauss also supposes, that in many instances those mental disturb-

ances which the Judaism of that day looked upon as Possession, in part yielded entirely to the word of the prophet and the firm faith of the diseased person, in part were at least relieved for some time, and that similar effects were produced in the case of other complaints as well, which had their immediate cause in a disturbance of the nervous system ; it is, moreover, very possible that even those in whose state of health no really important amendment took place, felt themselves momentarily relieved, considered themselves cured, or were considered by others to be so. But the range of these extraordinary material results, connected with the person and ministration of Jesus, cannot be extended further, unless we would overstep the limits of what is naturally possible ; and not only events so utterly inconceivable as the miracle of the loaves, the walking on the water, and the raising of the dead, but also the majority of the miraculous cures, in the form in which they are given, are not to be considered historical, whether these narratives had, or, as appears to have been the case with the majority of them, had not, a basis of events capable of a natural explanation. For the natural qualification for producing effects of a peculiar character not only upon the spiritual, but also on the bodily system of men which has been lately ascribed to Jesus—this natural and miraculous gift, in the sense in which it is understood, and in the application made of it, belongs as much as the supernatural one to the kingdom of the imagination, as it far surpasses all and every analogy which general experience presents to us. In themselves, indeed, even such phenomena as really appeared in connection with the operations of Jesus as a teacher, might have led Him to believe that He was in possession of a miraculous power peculiar to Himself ; nothing, however,

is implied in His own expressions (with the exception of those which stand in connection with narratives manifestly unhistorical, and thus can make no claim upon our credulity), which need compel us to exceed the conception of supernatural effects with which the faith of the sick was rewarded, and to attribute to Jesus the belief that He had produced not merely those results which others also might have produced (Matt. xii. 27 ; vii. 22), but that He had only to will in order to make possible the most impossible things. When Renan ascribes to Him the tenet that not merely He himself but every one who believes and prays is possessed of unlimited power over nature, this is a misunderstanding of a figurative speech (Matt. xvii. 20 ; Luke xvii. 6), and when the same writer (p. 266) unhesitatingly admits that acts in which we should now see nothing but deception or delusion occupy in the life of Jesus an important place, he allows himself to be seduced into an injustice towards the Founder of Christianity by his uncritical respect for the pretended eyewitness John, and for Mark the interpreter of Peter. He himself does certainly excuse him, with the words that not every one who did anything that we in the nineteenth century should consider a piece of folly or charlatanry was therefore a fool or a charlatan ; and, moreover, that Jesus appears rather to have had the character of a thaumaturge forced upon Him by others from without, not appearing Himself to have accepted that character until a late period, and after some resistance. Renan immediately adds, that He did not make much resistance to this opinion about Himself, but also did nothing to support it, and in any case felt its groundlessness. It is, however, obvious that this latter supposition is incompatible with the proposition that Jesus

attributed to Himself an unlimited power over nature, and the character of the other apologies may readily be inferred when we read, for example, "that the necessity of getting credit" led Jesus to make contradictory declarations about Himself (p. 251); that He sometimes availed Himself of an "innocent artifice," in order to impose upon one whom He wished to gain over by a show of superior knowledge (*e.g.*, John i. 42—48; iv. 17), and similar cases; or when the raising of Lazarus is supposed to be a drama enacted by the family at Bethany, in which it is not quite clear whether Jesus was only deceived by it Himself or subsequently shared in the deceit. The German critic's own good taste would have made it impossible for him to have hit upon so unfortunate an idea; but he was more fundamentally ensured against it by his insight into the character of our Evangelical accounts, and into what was possible, psychologically and morally, for such a character as Jesus was. Moreover, he has no need of lamenting with Renan (pp. 92, 319, 359, ff. and elsewhere), that by the character of Messiah and Thaumaturge which he assumed, the Galilean idyll was destroyed, the innocence of his original religious idealism (which, in Renan, has moreover an unmistakeable touch of country simplicity) is given up; that, in consequence of that character and the resistance which He met with in it, His disposition became passionate, imperious, and ill-humoured; and that, in the latter part of His life, He was no longer Himself. Strauss, on the contrary, can recognise in the course of the life of Jesus the natural development of heroic greatness which had grown to maturity in the tranquillity of His youthful years; in His Messianic appearance the historically necessary form of His ministry; and even in this, all that does not square with our preconceived notions he does not

need, with Renan, to lament as a sort of unavoidable evil, because he does not, like Renan, by a sugary idealisation, deprive himself of the power of comprehending the greatest figure of history in its full historical dependence.

Renan judges far more correctly with regard to the occurrence, of which the raising of Lazarus is merely a sample, the resurrection of Christ, and we must value his judgment all the more highly, as this is precisely the point at which the roads divide, and not merely is the superstitious view of the Evangelical history opposed to the historical; but also the so-called natural—in this case, indeed, the most unnatural—explanation is opposed to the mythical in a manner fundamentally decisive for the whole. The miraculous revival of the Crucified would be an occurrence in direct contradiction to laws of nature admitting of no exception in their application, and one which would make every natural view of Biblical history impossible, every analogy of experience inapplicable to it. We could not believe in the reality of such an occurrence, even if it were accredited ever so strongly. Instead of this, we have in favour of it only evidence at second and third hand, which, moreover, in all particulars, stands in contradiction to itself. Under such circumstances, whoever believes in the miracle of the resurrection has, in truth, no longer any ground for doubting any feature whatever in the Evangelical history on account of its contradiction to the laws of nature and of history. Whoever, on the other hand, does not believe in it has but one of two courses left: either to admit that Jesus came out of the grave alive, and then to deny the reality of His death, and accordingly to consider His revival as a natural re-awakening from a sham death; or if he cannot bring himself to do this then to give up

entirely this resurrection and to explain the faith in it on purely dogmatic grounds; and thus, at all events in the general principle to adopt the mythical view. Strauss, in his first "Life of Jesus," put this state of things in so clear a light that thenceforth all who attempted to take up the discussion after him were compelled, on this main point at least, to follow suit; and, at the same time, he established the grounds of his own view with such surpassing acuteness that even those who, like Ewald, were at a loss to find terms strong enough in which to repudiate and condemn the destructiveness and unscientific nature of his proceeding, could not avoid siding with the much-despised critic on the main point, however reluctantly, and with whatever amount of circumlocution; and so abandoning to him the position from which the whole view of the Evangelical history is governed. That Renan also adheres to this view, and entirely resists the temptation to a natural explanation of the miracle, he tells us (p. 433, f.); for the rest, he defers the more thorough discussion of the faith in the Resurrection to the continuation of his work, which is to treat of the Acts of the Apostles. So much the more carefully does Strauss deal with this important question in his late work; and whoever follows his discussions in a historical spirit will not, it appears to me, be able to escape his conclusion. For if we have only the choice between two assumptions, that Jesus in the grave arose again from a sham death, or that the faith in His resurrection was formed without any real revival—the second of these assumptions rests, independent of all other grounds, upon, as it appears to me, the following decisive considerations:—

In the first place the death of Jesus is better accredited, beyond all comparison, than His resurrection. With

regard to His crucifixion we have accounts which agree in all their main features; as to His resurrection, the statements of the different witnesses differ so much from one another, that one set maintain that the first appearances of their risen Lord were made to His disciples on the very day of the resurrection, in Jerusalem itself; the others, that this did not take place until some time after, in Galilee, nay, that even one and the same writer (Luke) in one work places His last appearance on the first, in another on the fortieth day after the resurrection; and these accounts are not only so circumstanced that they cannot be reconciled by the assumption of subordinate inaccuracies, but the whole representation of Matthew and Mark excludes the Jerusalem appearances of the remaining Evangelists, as much as the representation given by the latter excludes the Galilean appearance given by the earlier ones. If, on the other hand, an appeal is made to the circumstance that at all events the whole Christian community has always been unanimous in its belief in the reality of the resurrection, this cannot indeed be disputed; but quite as little the other proposition that not merely Christians but also Jews and heathens were quite as unanimously convinced of His death. Now, certainly, from the latter circumstance, the immediate inference is only this, that Jesus was crucified and hung upon the Cross until the occurrence, to all appearance, of His death; and this would not, unconditionally, exclude the possibility of a subsequent revival. But if the case were considered historically, this revival would only appear probable if we had before us evidence of its reality of a more original and less contradictory character than we actually have. Moreover, the circumstances of his execution are of such a character as to make a natural revival as good as impossible. That

any one, who, after long and exhausting abuse was at last crucified, left on the cross at least six hours, and taken down with all the symptoms of death having occurred—that under such circumstances, after being shut up in a sepulchre without any care and without food for two days and a half, he should have revived in virtue of the restorative power of nature after about thirty-six hours, and have been at once in a condition to undertake a pedestrian excursion either to Galilee or to Emmaus, one and a half miles distant—this is so exceedingly improbable that we are compelled to call for the most irrefragable proofs in order to believe it. Instead of this, not only are the accounts of the resurrection far removed from authenticity in point of origin, and, as regards their immediate substance in conflict with each other, but the general tenor of them is such that a natural continuation of the life of the Crucified is inconceivable. The Gospels, throughout, describe His appearance with features which represent Him not as a human being re-awakened to his former life, but as a supernatural being; a countenance which his nearest friends no longer recognise; miraculous entrance through closed doors; sudden coming and sudden vanishing; ascension into Heaven; and besides all this something that cannot be reconciled with it, perceptibility by the sense of touch and other proofs of the bodily identity of the Risen One with the Crucified. Whence these features if, as is assumed, Jesus really arose after a natural manner, and then, after his resurrection, as we are to suppose, associated as before with His disciples? and what conception are we to form of His own condition? If He believed Himself, as in this case we should have to suppose, to have been rescued from death after a miraculous manner, He must, after such experience of miraculous

assistance from above, have only returned all the more boldly to His public ministry. If, on the other hand, He saw in what had happened to Him a natural occurrence, so that He considered it necessary to conceal Himself from His enemies, it was His duty, unless He wished to encourage a deception in the most unjustifiable manner, to inform His disciples of the true state of the case instead of limiting Himself to encounters with them which could only have the effect of awakening in them the belief that they had no longer to deal with a natural human being. But a natural revival, moreover, could not have produced at all in the disciples the belief which we find them entertaining in the sequel.

“A being who had stolen half-dead out of the sepulchre, who crept about weak and ill, wanting medical treatment, who required bandaging, strengthening and indulgence and who still at last yielded to His sufferings; it is impossible,” as Strauss rightly says; “that He could have given to His disciples the impression that He was a conqueror over death and the grave, the Prince of Life, an impression which lay at the bottom of their future ministry.” Moreover, finally, what conception are we to form of the termination of a life to which Jesus must be supposed to have returned by so remarkable an accident, for it can scarcely be called otherwise? As nothing more is heard of Him after a few transient appearances, He must, in consequence of the ill-treatment He had received, have very soon died in obscurity. But how are we to conceive of this more in detail? Are His disciples to be supposed to have known of it, and notwithstanding, to have preached of Him as of the Risen Lord, and who had been raised up to Heaven? This is impossible. Or had He concealed His place of refuge even from them, and those secret

friends whom, in this case, He must have had? He would thus Himself be liable to the suspicion of intentional deceit, and we should be involved in that complication of romantic improbabilities which have now been justly exploded, and which in and for themselves refute an assumption which can only be maintained at the price of adopting them.

Now it might indeed appear if we let drop the reality of the resurrection of Jesus that difficulties of equal magnitude arise. Even His first adherents were as firmly convinced, as of their own life, that the Crucified had, after a few days returned to life; this conviction formed the irremovable basis of their entire subsequent operations; and many of them even believed that they had seen the Risen One. This is fully established not merely by our Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles but by a witness much earlier still, and one who stood nearer to the occurrences, the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. xv.), to whom we may also add the Revelation of John (i., 5—18, etc.); though it must certainly be allowed that not only do the Evangelical accounts of the appearances of the Risen One go far beyond what the persons concerned originally believed they had observed, but that even Paul does not, throughout, profess to have received his statements from those who had participated in the sight of those appearances. How then is the irrefragable belief of the personal disciples of Jesus and of the whole Christian Church to be explained, if the occurrence to which it relates did not, in reality, take place at all?

This question might be at once met by the counter-question which Strauss also puts with his usual acuteness; namely, how we are to explain the faith of Paul in the personal appearance of Christ which he saw? Paul places this appearance on exactly the same footing with those

which were imparted to the older Apostles; it has for him the same reality, and he considers it exactly as they do what they saw, as an actual proof for the reality of the Resurrection of Christ. And yet, unless we would entirely quit the ground of possibility and probability, a personal meeting with the Crucified is not, in the case of Paul, to be thought of; we are concerned with a purely inward vision of Him which the vivid excitement of the seer's mind and imagination caused him to look upon as an external appearance. Why should not the case have been the same with those earlier Christophanies? Strauss has again convincingly pointed out that the conditions of such visions were present in abundance in the earliest circle of the worshippers of Jesus. We all know with what difficulty the human heart accustoms itself to believe what a man sees with his own eyes when it stands in contradiction with his wants and wishes; how, on the death of connections and close friends, and when we have ourselves closed their eyes and accompanied them to the grave, we cannot still divest ourselves of the idea that all we have gone through has only been a dream, that what is so dreadful *has not* taken place because it *could not* and *should not* have taken place; still more when we have not gone through it ourselves, but only heard of it at a distance. Far more strength must this feeling have acquired in a case in which with personal adherence there co-operated the most overpowering impulses of a deeply-rooted religious faith, a faith interwoven with all the threads of life, suppressing all other thoughts and interests. How far, in such a case, the power of sentiment will go, how the feeling of reverence and hope, and even that of fear and horror will work upon the imagination, we may learn from the legends of the return of Charle-

magne and the Hohenstauffen Kings, and on the other hand, from the expectation of Nero's return, entertained by Christians and heathen. And yet these are but very weak analogies to the case which we have now before us. With the disciples of Jesus the question was not merely whether their Teacher and Master was alive or dead, but the question for them was whether His entire work was or was not *nil*, His doctrine and His miracles a fraud, their trust in Him a most miserable delusion, He Himself a false prophet, and as such rightly condemned to death on the accursed tree. They could not believe in Him and His destiny, they must give up their whole view of Him and their love to Him, all their hopes, all the fruits which their intercourse with Him had produced, unless they could secure the conviction that, notwithstanding His death He was still alive, and would, in time, gloriously complete His work. For us, from our point of view, this conviction would be sufficiently attained by the thought that He who had died in the body was, in the spirit, continuing to live with God. To the native of Palestine, who knew nothing of such a spiritual immortality, and according to whose faith there lay between death and resurrection only the gloomy ghost-like life in Scheol, this loophole was closed up. For him there was but one mode of rescuing himself and his faith from that shipwreck with which he was threatened by the opposition between actual facts and his dearest convictions; he was compelled to assume that, as at some future time God was to summon forth all the righteous from their graves, so He had already recalled from death Him whose resurrection must precede that of all others, taken Him up into His glory and exalted Him to that heaven, from which, moreover, the Messiah was to come. For the disciples of

Jesus this assumption was all the more obvious, if He had Himself opened a view of this sort for the emergency of His death, though, it might be, only in indefinite allusions and images. But even without this to fall back upon, it could not have been difficult for them to find what it was a necessity for them to believe, foretold in numerous passages of the Old Testament writings, in a manner most luminously evident to them on their own principles of interpretation, as, indeed, find it they did. On the other hand, it is not necessary, for the explanation of their faith, to call in the aid of such accidental circumstances as this, that His sepulchre was found empty on the second day after His death. Instead of being misled by these accounts, improbable in themselves and only resting on their connection with the miracle of the resurrection, we shall do best to hold by the best accredited and thoroughly credible account (in Matthew and Mark), according to which the disciples first saw their risen Lord in Galilee; and, consequently, this district was the cradle of the faith in the resurrection. After the execution of Jesus, and perhaps even before it, His disciples fled in terror to their native home; here they first assembled again, and in the faith in the resurrection of their Master, found power for the continuance of His work; then when, after a considerable time, they returned to the capital, their belief could neither be gainsaid by the exhibition of His body, nor be strengthened by the sight of His vacant sepulchre. For no one now knew what had become of the body, which had probably been buried in the ground on which the crucifixion had taken place. Now the disciples might certainly have been convinced that Jesus had re-awakened from death and passed into a new and higher life, without therefore necessarily believing that they had themselves

beheld the Risen One; and it is possible, indeed, that their faith in the resurrection took at first a simpler form. But the whole character and tone of the first Christian community made it almost impossible that that faith should continue merely as a dogmatic conviction of this character. All the conditions which originally produced that faith must have tended to give it the definite character of actual perception, the certainty of personal experience. So long as this was wanting, so long as the faith in the resurrection was still but an inward conviction, it left room for doubt; nothing but ocular demonstration could raise the much desired fact above all question. But how could this ocular demonstration be long wanting in a society which, by its very nature, was as little qualified as could be to distinguish accurately between the imaginary and the real, and which, moreover, had been at that time most profoundly excited in their inmost feelings, and lived more in the ideal world of their belief than in the external world of reality—a society for which it was a heartfelt necessity and an article of their faith to be expecting every moment the miracle of miracles, the coming of the Messiah from Heaven; in which, by what they suffered from the dis-illusion they had undergone, by the agony they underwent from the murder of their beloved Teacher, by pain at the loss of all earthly blessings, by longing for salvation and certainty of salvation, by the shocking contradiction between reality, on the one part, and a glowing faith and hope on the other, the tension of religious feeling, the power of a pious imagination had been intensified to the utmost? If ever the internal and external conditions necessary for the production of visions were present in abundance, they were so in the case of this earliest society of the adherents of the Crucified. If we add that individual

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members of this society were also physically inclined to them, we shall be the less surprised at their occurrence; and it is well worth attention that, according to the unanimous tradition of the sources of our information, they were women, and especially that Mary of Magdala, out of whom Jesus was said to have driven seven devils, and who must therefore, in any case, have been a woman of very excitable temperament, to whom the Risen One first showed Himself. But when once one such appearance had been heard of, it would have been absolutely contrary to the nature of such events, if several had not shortly followed; and if what certain individuals believed themselves to have seen or heard of had not, sometimes in the legend, sometimes in their own recollection, been exaggerated, increased, and more graphically coloured. But in this development of the faith in the resurrection, we must be careful not to attribute too much importance to these visions, and especially to the first of them. This faith is not merely the product of religious fanaticism, or even (as has been hinted above) of the devotion of a nervous female; neither is it altogether the product of the visions which were confounded with real appearances. It is not so even when said to have arisen primarily in and with these visions; it is so still less when it preceded them and obtained its confirmation through them supplementarily only. But the firmest basis of this faith, the real nucleus of it, is the impression which Jesus left behind in the minds of His followers by His doctrine and His whole personality. The essential conditions of its origin and its more detailed formation, lie in the Messianic idea which had gathered round the person of Jesus, in the whole character of Jewish dogmatism and mode of thought, in the state of things which was brought about by

the execution of Jesus, in passages of the Old Testament which admitted of a Messianic interpretation, and probably also in individual expressions of Jesus which, in anticipation of His fall, represented the victory of His cause and His followers, under the form of a future return.

If, lastly, we must admit that the visionary appearances of Christ first gave to the faith in the resurrection its complete corroboration, still, in the case of the older disciples of Jesus, as in that of Paul, they are not the ground of their faith, but, in any case, only the form under which it arose in the minds of the faithful. Neither can it be said that this faith could not possibly have been developed so rapidly without an external cause. How do we know how rapidly it did develop itself? For that Jesus was seen alive again so early as on the second morning after His death is stated only in the comparatively late accounts of our Gospels, and it stands in unmistakeable contradiction with the direction which, in Matt. xxviii. 7, and Mark xvi. 7, is given by the angel to the women to send the Apostles to Galilee, as they shall there behold their Risen Lord. This direction, on the contrary, supposes that the tradition to which it belonged knew nothing of appearances on the morning of the resurrection, nor of any anterior to these later ones in Galilee. As regards Paul, he says, indeed, 1 Cor. xv. 4, that Christ *rose again* on the third day, but not one word about His having *been seen* on this third day. And if we ask him how he knows anything about the third day, he refers us, besides tradition, to the Scriptures, *i.e.*, to passages of the Old Testament interpreted in a Messianic sense; and it is possible that such passages as Hos. vi. 2, did really originate this limitation of time. Possible also that an expression of Jesus Himself, in which the three

days (as in Luke xiii. 32) stood symbolically as a round number, gave occasion to it (compare Matt. xxvi. 61 parall.) But that, at first, the resurrection was only assumed generally to have taken place on the third day, but the exact day is not accurately fixed — of this, a trace might be found in Matt. xii. 40, as here the Evangelist, differing from his own later statement, represents Jesus as saying that He shall be in the grave three days and three nights. This, indeed, may there be so expressed only on account of the parallel of Jonas; but that view of the case might also have descended from a period in which the narratives of the resurrection were not, as yet, referred to any fixed type.

With the faith in the resurrection, only the beginning was made of representing the figure of Jesus as something supernatural. The mode in which, under the influence of this tendency, the evangelical history was remodelled, and what different forms the several parts of it passed through in this process of remodelling, is investigated by Strauss (Renan's work parts company from us here) in the second part of his work, and this investigation is the most attractive and instructive part of his whole work. Whoever wishes to form a conception of the spirit in which the original Christian legend was formed and the history of Christianity written, to become acquainted with the gradual growth of the tradition, with the ever-strengthening and more and more conscious intrusion of dogmatic interests into the historical narrative—above all, whoever wishes to follow the road opened by Baur, and so to penetrate deeper into the view and process of the fourth Evangelist, will do well to read this section with profound attention. The present discussion, however, in order to keep within its limits, must stop

here. If, of the two works which gave rise to it, the German has engaged us incomparably more than the French, this will be found to be the necessary consequence of the comparative internal value of each. In spite of all the excellences which we have readily recognised as belonging to Renan's work, that of Strauss' alone fully corresponds to the present condition of scientific theological criticism, and is calculated to lead it onwards an important step. Here, in Germany, we may learn much from Renan in point of form, not much in point of substance, and give the preference over him, as regards the tenability of their scientific position to some later French works; as, for instance, to those of Colani and G. Von Eichthal. But the success which it has met with, among his own countrymen and Romish countries generally, is not undeserved. A great part of this success is certainly due to the fact that it fell in with that anti-hierarchical impulse which is so widely extended at present in France, and still more in Italy; another part, and not a small one, it owes to the absurd and passionate opposition of the clergy. Moreover, what contributed not a little to this success was, most certainly, his graceful, vivid, tasteful style; nay, much which we are compelled to consider a defect, in a scientific point of view, was, undoubtedly, to the majority of his readers, a recommendation. But the importance of his work is not thereby destroyed: to have uttered the right word at the right time is to have done something; and a "book that (as Strauss says) almost before it was published was condemned by bishops innumerable, and the Romish Consistory itself, must necessarily be a book of merit."

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